



REMAINS

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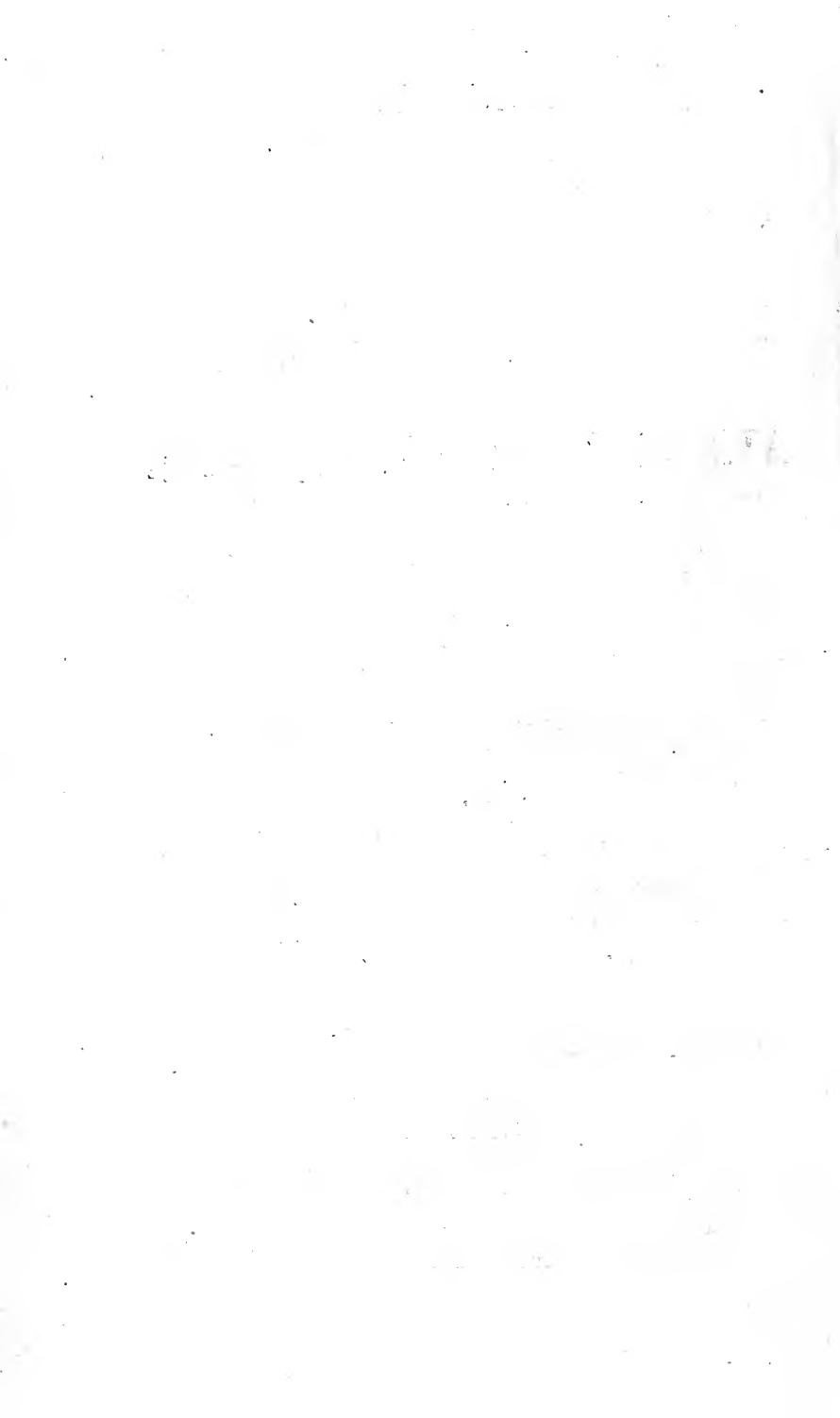
ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ.

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FROM THE REV. JOHN WESLEY TO
ALEX. KNOX, ESQ.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

London, Jan. 27, 1776.

I WROTE a particular answer to your last, a day or two after I received it. 'Tis well if some one did not intercept it, otherwise I know not how it could miscarry. Your illness will continue just so long as is necessary to suppress the fire of youth, to keep you dead to the world, and to prevent your seeking happiness where it never was, nor ever can be found. Considered in this view, it is a great blessing, and a proof of God's watchful care over you.

* * * * *

I cannot but admire the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence with regard to you. As you have all the necessities and conveniencies of life; as you have a tender, indulgent parent; as you have a natural sprightliness and flow of spirits; you must, in all probability, have excited the admiration or affection of your relations and acquaintance, and have placed your happiness therein, had not so wonderful a counterpoise been prepared for you. A common illness, especially a transient one,

would by no means have answered the intention, or saved you either from admiring yourself, or from being admired by others. Therefore, God keeps you long in His school, the very best wherein Infinite Wisdom could place you, that you may thoroughly learn to be meek and lowly in heart, and to seek all your happiness in God.

Wishing every blessing to my dear Mrs. Knox and the little ones,

I remain yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Congleton, April 1, 1776.

I AM fully persuaded all your disorders depend upon a deep scurvy. What influence the bark may have upon this, I cannot tell: however, I have no objection to a decoction or infusion of it. I object only to your taking it in specie; because I can never reconcile to common sense the introducing ounce after ounce of powdered post into a human stomach. But I really think you rather want anti-scorbutic medicines, such as watercresses, or decoction of nettles or burdock. This accounts for your almost continual depression of spirits, which is a bodily as well as spiritual malady. And it is permitted to repress the fire of

youth, and to wean you from the desire of earthly things; to teach you that happy lesson —

Wealth, honour, pleasure, and what else,
 This short enduring world can give;
 Tempt as ye will, my heart repels —
 To Christ alone resolved to live.

* * * * *

My dear ALLECK, yours very affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Edinburgh, May 28, 1776.

I RECEIVED yours a day or two ago, at my return from the north of Scotland. * * * I judge your disorder to be but partly natural, and partly divine: the gift of God, perhaps, by the ministry of angels, to balance the natural petulance of youth; to save you from foolish desires; and to keep you steady in the pursuit of that better part which shall never be taken from you. Whether you have more or less sorrow, it matters not: you want only more faith. This is the one point. Dare to believe; on Christ lay hold; see all your sins on Jesus laid, and by His stripes you are healed. Very probably, if I live, I shall be detained in London great part of next summer.

* * * * *

Look up! Is not health at hand, both for soul and body? You have no business with fear. It is good for nothing. We are "saved by hope."

* * * * *

I am, my dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

Bristol, March 19, 1777.

IF the returns of your disorder are more and more gentle, there is reason to hope it will be at length totally removed. Very probably, if you live to five or six-and-twenty, your constitution will take a new turn: but it is certainly the design of Him that loves you to heal both body and soul; and possibly He delays the healing of the former, that the cure of the latter may keep pace with it. As "it is a great loss to lose an affliction," He would not have you lose what you have suffered. I trust it will not be lost, but will be for your profit, that you may be partaker of His holiness. It is a blessing that He has given you that fear which is the beginning of wisdom; and it is a pledge of greater things to come. How soon? Perhaps to-day.

* * * * *

If I could spare time, I would gladly accept of your invitation; but I doubt whether I can get

any further than Dublin. Peace be with all your spirits !

I am, my dear ALLECK, yours most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

Bristol, July 29, 1777.

I AM just returned from a journey through Monmouthshire, and other parts of Wales.

No : God has not forgotten you. You must not say, " He hideth away His face, and He will never see it." Surely God hath seen it ; and He cannot despise the work of His own hands. But He frequently delays giving bodily health, till He heals soul and body together. Perhaps this is His design concerning *you*. But why do not you go to the salt water ? If you are short of money, let me have the pleasure of assisting you a little. Meantime I give you a word for your consideration, " Why art thou so heavy, O my soul ? and why art thou so disquieted within me ? O put thy trust in God ! I shall yet give Him thanks, who is the help of my countenance, and my God."

Peace be with all your spirits !

I am yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Penrhyn, August 29, 1777.

You should read Mr. Fletcher's "Essay on Truth." He has there put it beyond all doubt, that there is a medium between a child of God and a child of the devil; namely, a servant of God. This is *your* state. You are not yet a son, but you are a servant; and you are waiting for the Spirit of adoption, which will cry in your heart, "Abba, Father." You have "received the Spirit of grace," and, in a measure, work righteousness. Without being pained for what you have not, you have cause to bless God for what you have; and to wait patiently till he gives the rest by revealing His Son in your heart.

For all this, I have little doubt of seeing you a healthy as well as a happy man. But, it is true, nothing less than Almighty power can heal either your soul or body. And is not this enough? Have not you reason to rejoice that "Salvation cometh of the Lord?" I pray, on whom can you better depend? Who loves you better than He? Away, then, with despair! Hope unto the end. To Him I recommend you all. And I am,

Dear ALLECK, yours most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

London, Feb. 26, 1778.

IN the latter end of March I hope to be in Dublin, and about the twenty-eighth of May in Londonderry. It is a place I always loved; but I shall love it more than ever, if I have the pleasure of lodging with you. With regard to your health, both of body and mind, if you could take one advice, it would have a surprising effect. It is this: "Take no thought for the morrow." You know not how much even your body suffers by this. To-day only is yours. Look up, and He will bless you all to-day.

I am, my dear ALLECK, very affectionately yours,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Dublin, April 2, 1778.

I CAME hither this morning, after a rough passage, from Liverpool; and purpose (if God continue my life and health) to be with you at Londonderry on Friday, May 28th.

It is right to know ourselves, but not to stop there, as you are apt to do. This is only of use if it leads us to know Him that loves and saves sinners: and, I doubt not, He will save *you*.

Trust Him, and you shall praise Him. I hope my dear Sally has not forgotten me. Peace be with all your spirits !

I am, dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Killrea, June 5, 1778.

I ADVISE you,

1. Never sit up later than ten.
2. Never rise later than six.
3. Walk at least an hour daily in the open air : if it rains all day, in the dining-room.

* * * * *

7. Spend the first hour in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, in private prayer, and reading the Scriptures in order, with the notes, and any other closely practical book.

8. Spend some time afterwards in the morning in reading Bishop Pearson, or any other book of divinity ; and spend more or less time in the afternoon in reading history, poetry, or philosophy.

9. Trust in God. Resist every distrustful thought the moment it is injected. God is on your side. Believe not the old murderer who tells you the contrary.

Write all your mind to me from time to time. I hope you will all find a blessing when you meet on Sunday. Peace be with all your spirits !

I am yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Dublin, July 11, 1778.

IT is a natural effect of your bodily weakness, and the turn of your mind, that you are continually inclined to write bitter things against yourself. Hence you are easily persuaded to believe him that tells you that you "are void of every degree of saving faith." No : that is not the case. For salvation is only by faith ; and you have received a degree of salvation : you are saved from many outward sins—from the corruption that overspreads the land as a flood. You are saved, in a degree, from inward sin ; from impenitence, for you know and feel yourself a sinner. You are saved, in a degree, from pride ; for you begin to know yourself poor and helpless. You are saved from seeking happiness in the world : this is not a small thing. O praise God for all you have ; and trust Him for all you want ! Peace be with your spirits !

I am, dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

London, August 16, 1778.

You have long been under that temptation of despising the day of small things: although, indeed, they are not small things which God has done for you already. That you are still too lukewarm is most certain: you have need to stir up the gift of God that is in you; and you have need to praise Him, that His hand is still upon you for good, preserving you from presumptuous sins. You ought to be sensible of this, and to be thankful for it, which you may be without "applauding yourself." That you have "no right to expect the continuance of your health" is undoubtedly true: that is, you cannot claim it from God's justice; you do not merit it at His hands. But is this the measure whereby He deals with his poor creatures? Does He give us no more blessings than we deserve? Does He treat us, in all things, according to his justice? Not so; but mercy rejoices over judgment! Therefore, expect from Him, not what you deserve, but what you want—health of soul and health of body: ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; not for your worthiness, but because "worthy is the Lamb."

The peace of God be with all your spirits!

I am, dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

Bristol, Sept. 27, 1778.

I AM afraid the late return of your fits was, in some measure, my fault ; because I did not provide you with the remedy which, probably, would have prevented it. I thought of it, indeed ; but went no further, when you said your grandmother would send you down to the salt water. I doubt you have not been there this fine autumn ; and now the year is too far spent.

Some time since, I was reading an account of a person in France, whom his confessor absolutely forbade (for such a time) to think of his sins, and ordered him “to think only of the mercies of God in Christ.” It had an admirable effect on that desponding man. I know not but it might have the same upon you. Do not look down, but look up. Let not the corruptible body press down the soul, and give no place to that evil one who would keep you continually poring on the dark side of the prospect. There is good determined concerning you, and not evil. God has not forsaken you. Thou shalt not die, but live, and declare the loving kindness of the Lord. He has, indeed, chastised and corrected you, but He hath not given you over to death. But you must not coop yourself up in the house : you must be in the open air as much as possible ; nay, and you should be on horseback as often as you can.

* * * * *

I commend you all to Him that careth for you, and am,

Dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

October 28, 1778.

You never need be afraid of writing to me too often. I am nearly concerned in all that concerns you; and am, therefore, always well pleased to hear from you, and to find you are still setting your face heavenward.

The directing as to this, or that means, is as much an answer to prayer as if the cure was immediately wrought. But, it will be a double blessing, if you give yourself up to the great Physician, that He may heal soul and body together; and, unquestionably, this is His design. He wants to give you, and my dear Mrs. Knox, both inward and outward health. And why not now? Surely all things are ready: believe, and receive the blessing. There can be no doubt but your bodily disorder greatly affects your mind. Be careful to prevent the disease, by diet rather than physic. Look up, and wait for happy days!

Dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

London, July 31, 1779.

COME when they will, whether I am more or less busy, your letters are always welcome. * * *
If you had had firm and constant health, I do not

see how you could have been saved: you would have been so admired, caressed, and applauded by your well-meaning relations, and perhaps by others, that it would have been next to impossible for you to have escaped the depths of pride, and the height of vanity. But God was merciful to you, and sent this affliction to humble and prove you, and shew you what was in your heart. In the meantime, nothing is more sure than that all these things will work together for some good.

Far, far beyond thy thought
His counsel shall appear,
When fully He the work has wrought
Which caused thy needless fear!

Doubtless He may give you an earnest of it now. Does not a beam of hope break into your soul? Can you help saying,

“ God is love! I know, I feel!
Jesus weeps, but loves me still.”

Peace be with all your spirits!

I am, dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

London, Dec. 23, 1779.

THE whole account of yourself which you still give, convinces me more and more of what I have once and again observed, concerning the nature of your

disorder. It is undeniable, 1. That you have a bodily complaint. Your nerves are greatly disordered; and although it is only now and then that this rises so high as to occasion a fit, yet it has a constant influence upon you, so as to cause a dejection of spirits. This dejection is no more imputed to you as a sin, than the flowing of the blood in your veins. 2. Although I will not say you have no faith, yet it is certain your faith is small; and you are fearful, because you are of little faith: this is another source of your uneasiness. 3. You want to have the love of God fully shed abroad in your heart: you have only now and then a little touch of thankfulness, a small spark of that divine fire; and hence anger, or at least fretfulness and peevishness, more or less, will naturally arise. Add to these, 4. the main cause—diabolical agency. Satan will surely take occasion, from the situation you are in, to inject a thousand thoughts; and will then accuse you for them: but he, not you, shall answer for them to God. God is on your side: He knows whereof you are made; and Jesus careth for you. He keeps you, and my dear Mrs. Knox, as the apple of an eye; His Spirit helps your infirmities; He is purifying you in that furnace; and when you have been tried, you shall come forth as gold. Expect the blessing: is it not at hand?

I am, my dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

Near London, Jan. 28, 1780.

It will certainly be worth your while to make a trial of that mineral water; it is highly probable God will make it a means of lessening, if not removing, your bodily disorder. That this is in a considerable degree scorbutic, I cannot make any question; as one almost constant symptom of the scurvy is a great depression of the spirits. * * * * I cannot advise you, in the mean time, to shut yourself up at home; it is neither good for your body nor your mind. You cannot possibly have bodily health without daily exercise in the open air; and you have no reason to expect the spirit of a healthful mind unless you use the means that God has ordained. You well know, faith cometh by hearing: I should, therefore, advise you to lose no opportunity of hearing; and trust God with the event. You are not likely to be in a more uncomfortable state than you are already. And which is the greater evil of the two, even supposing the worst? Certainly, your having two fits is a less evil than your losing fifty precious opportunities. Oh! break through that fear, which is a mere snare of the devil. I commend you and yours to Him that is ready to save you in soul and body; and am,

Dear ALLECK, yours affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ALLECK,

London, Nov. 18, 1780.

My mind is exactly the same towards you as it has been for several years; with this only difference (which is very natural), that the longer I know you the more I love you. I am not soon tired of my friends. My brother laughs at me, and says, "Nay, it signifies nothing to tell you any thing; for whomever you once love, you will love on through thick and thin."

* * * * *

As I have frequently observed to you, I am still persuaded it is chiefly your body which presses down your soul; and, if it please God to heal your body, I doubt not your mind will be far easier. I do not at all despair of seeing you a happy man, full of joy and peace in believing. Look up; and expect Him that is mighty to save.

I am, dear ALLECK, yours most affectionately,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

London, December 23, 1780.

You are very ingenious in finding out arguments against yourself; and, if you set your wit to it, they will never be wanting. Besides, there is an old sophister, who has been puzzling causes for these

six thousand years, that will always be ready to supply you with reasons for every kind of unbelief. But, "God will not give faith to the double-minded; to him who asks what he does not desire to receive." No, not while he is double-minded: but, He will first take away your double-mindedness (perhaps while you are reading this)! and then give you the faith to which all things are possible. "Yes, tomorrow, or at some other time." No time like the time present! "To-day, if you will hear his voice," He says, "I am thy salvation." Why not to-day? Is not one day with Him as a thousand years? And whatever He could do in a thousand years, can He not do in one day? That this cannot be done without a miracle, is absolutely certain. But, why should not you expect that miracle? This is no presumption; it is an expectation that the God of truth will not be worse than his word. He will not, Alleck! He will not! Do not imagine He will. He knows your simpleness. All your faults are before Him; and it may be, the word is just now gone forth, "I will heal him, for my own name's sake." Do not reason, but look up! Let your heart (dull and cold as it is) cry out, "Be it unto me, according to thy word!"

I am ever yours,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

Near London, Feb. 5, 1784.

* * * * *

As to the love of praise, I do not doubt but you have much more of it than you want; and I am persuaded the Great Physician shews you the disease on purpose that he may cure it. But yet, I apprehend, you a little mistake. You blame yourself, where no blame is. "To be pleased with the approbation of our fellow-creatures," is no part of corrupt nature. It belongs to our pure nature; and to cherish it in a degree, is a duty, and not a sin.

* * * * *

Peace be with you and yours !

I am, my dear ALLECK, ever yours,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

Coleraine, June 8, 1785.

* * * * *

HAVING now deeply considered your case, I send you my matured thoughts; which I beg Mrs. Knox and you impartially to consider in the presence of God. But, beware you do not fix your judgment before you hear the cause: otherwise I

shall lose my labour ; and you may lose your life, if not your soul.

You say, " The reason why I do not go out is this, I am afraid of falling in the street. And I do not attend the church, or the preaching-house, for fear I should fall down there, and disturb the congregation."

This is the clear state of the case. The question is, then, Is this reason sufficient, or is it not ?

I am fully persuaded, it is not. For, first, you are by no means sure that you shall fall down in the church, or in the congregation. You have great reason to hope you shall not : although, I should not wonder if your fits were now both more frequent and more severe than they are.

But, secondly, Does not common sense teach us, *e malis minimum* ? Now, I insist upon it, that your falling in the street or congregation once every month, is a less evil than the shutting yourself up ; so that, were it pronounced by a voice from heaven, " Either shut thyself up, or endure this shame once a month, or even once a week,—take thy choice ;" it would be wisest to choose the latter, for it is incomparably the less evil of the two.

It is indisputably plain to every impartial person, that, by thus cooping yourself up, you hurt your body ; by want of air and exercise, you weaken it continually. I wonder you have not fits every day. And you hurt your soul by neglecting the ordinances of God, which you have no authority to do, unless you were sick in bed.

My dear Alleck, let there be no delay ! Break

through ! at all hazards, break through ! Go out this very day, and trust God ! If your mother hinders you, she kills you with kindness ; and I am not sure it will not cost her the life of another child, though God tries milder methods first. I say again, go out to-day, and every day. It will help both your body and soul, as well as remove a great burden from the mind of

Yours in tender affection,

J. WESLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

DEAR ALLECK,

Dublin, July 10, 1785.

* * * * *

WHAT I advise you to is this : every fair day, walk to, if not round, the churchyard. When you are a little hardened by this, you may venture, at a convenient opportunity (suppose on a Sunday morning), to attend the public worship. Till you do, I cannot say you are in God's way ; and, therefore, I am not sure you will find his blessing.

* * * * *

Peace be with all your spirits ! We are to sail to-night.

My dear ALLECK, adieu !

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO GEORGE
SCHOALES, ESQ.

1795. [No other date.]

THE subject on which you have particularly written at present, is as interesting as it is painful. I do not wonder it has engaged your friendly concern; and I wish sincerely I could be the instrument of realising your benevolent views. But, alas! my friend, if my intimacy with great men were even as close as you seem to suppose, my interference, I am convinced, would avail little or nothing. * * Do not, I beseech you, infer from this, that I am an altered man; and that, by mixing with the world, I have lost, at least in part, my original warmth of philanthropy. No, my friend, I have only learned to form a truer estimate of my own power and of other men's professions; and not to mistake civility for friendship, nor common acts of courtesy for the pledges of any thing more than, at best, their own occasional repetition.

But, in this case, I should imagine, your friend may entertain good hopes from his own application to the Irish Government. I believe it is, at this moment, conducted on as fair and liberal principles as it has been at any period. And that, therefore, where the claims are such as to be entitled to attention, influence would be unnecessary.

* * * Write to me, I pray you, and tell me what you are doing. I am interested sincerely for those to whom you are attached; but I am, most of all, interested for yourself.

You would gratify me much, by finding out for

me how Cowper the poet is at present. If you ever see Mr. Newton, of St. Mary's, Woolnoth, he is the man to inform you. Have you ever met with Mr. Wilberforce? I wish to know something of him as a private man; for, in public, I think he is a paragon of honesty.

Ever yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 31st, 1796.

HAVING received so many (three at least) of your letters since I have written to you, I feel bound in duty, as, believe me, I am impelled by inclination, to tell you how sincerely I am obliged to you. I have been so much accustomed to receive letters of a kind calculated to vex me, that the postman's rap at the door always affects my nerves. But, when my servant (Michael, you know) hands me a letter of yours, the very superscription sets me to rights at once; and I am ready to forgive the previous agitation, the ease which succeeds is so pleasant.

Never were you more completely mistaken, than in supposing me methodised. In truth, I rather suspect that you harbour no such thought. You, perhaps, even inferred, from my negligence, that I had become more unmethodical than ever; and, therefore, took the gentlest method possible of

applying friendly correction. If this was your design, I sincerely thank you; but I cannot flatter you with the hope of much success. I deem myself, in that respect, fit only for the hospital of incurables. I am far from justifying my irregularities; but I think, impartially (and I hope the gracious God will deem), that they are matter of misfortune, rather than of crime. After all, I have reason to be thankful that my bad habits are to be ranked amongst foibles rather than sins; for I fear, if the latter were the case, I should be undone, from the pure want of self-government.

The truth is, that both the state of my health, and the circumstances in which Providence has placed me, are highly unfavourable to regularity. From the former cause, I am obliged to do what I engage in, not as I would, but as I can; to begin, to break off, to begin again, to undo, to recommence, to blot several sheets of paper before I can fill one. Thus many a forenoon passes off fruitlessly; and, when the dining hour comes, then the second cause begins to operate: then I must, if possible, get into company; for, so surely as I spend a whole day alone (and even this, however, I do sometimes doom myself to), I am the worse for it: and you know I have no other alternative than to be alone, or go abroad. The evening, of course, is, in general, an unavoidable vacation; and though, on my return home, I sometimes sit down to work, and continue to a late hour, I have, almost always, cause to repent it.

“Then,” you’ll say, “why don’t you rise early, and devote the morning to business?” Indeed, because I cannot. If I am awake much before

nine, I feel jaded through the morning : my morning sleeps are, usually, the soundest and the most comfortable ; and, when I want them, I suffer for it. Besides, my health is so exceedingly precarious, and, when I am ill, I am so very ill, that I am afraid to attempt conquering even a bad habit, for fear of worse consequences. And I must add, with respect to this particular, that I am so haunted with the dread of morbid melancholy, and I have found my spirits so much more liable to depression in the morning than at any other part of the day, that I am afraid of beginning it too soon. From all this arises a sort of busy idleness ; a want, and yet a waste, of time ; a trifling away of hours, and yet an inability to command minutes ; a neglect of many a duty, and, at the same time, almost the impossibility of doing otherwise. To this, then, and this only, you are to attribute my negligence towards you. I cannot send you merely a few lines ; and, at the same time, find it completely impracticable to fill half a sheet. I think to-day, I'll do it to-morrow. But to-morrow, perhaps, brings some indispensable avocation : I must go out to the other side of the town, perhaps ; and then, assuredly, the morning is lost too. Thus I may say, " to will is present with me, but, how to perform that which is good, I find not."

In a short time I hope to be able to send you a new edition of my " Thoughts on the Will of the People." I shall, probably, have a number of them sent over, and, perhaps, put into the hands of Burke, Lord Auckland, &c. * * *

I must now only bid you adieu !

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellarena, Co. Derry, 1797,
[no other date.]

* * * * * I congratulate you on your friend Lawrence's speech: there is much strong sense in it; and the doctrine of invasion, which you spoke of, urged with earnestness. This latter idea, however, I take to be nearly as chimerical as the old enchanter Merlin's plan of fortifying Britain with a wall of brass. Whatever might have been done in that way was lost at the only possible season, for want of honesty and unanimity among the associated powers. Their want of unanimity was obvious to all the world; and, had there been either honesty or wisdom, they would have sought to divide France within itself, by the frank avowal of such a purpose as would have attached to each other all the lovers of order. This was the urgent advice of Mallet du Pan, Calonne, and Dumouriez: but, neglecting this, because "he that doeth evil hateth the light," they made their attack like common, self-interested invaders; and by that means, created a common cause among all parties who did not wish to see their country mangled by the savage policy of unfeeling Machiavelians. I wish I could acquit Great Britain from being a party in this "mystery of iniquity." But what else could be the event? "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity." With respect to the assessment, however, I entirely agree with your

friend : indeed, I think much more might be said in favour of it than has been adduced yet. It strikes me as one of the most substantially useful measures that ever was adopted. In my mind, the great foible in the English character has been a passion for war. How loud have the people been in their clamours, again and again, against such ministers as shewed an unwillingness to embark in it ! The business of the Falkland Islands is still fresh in our memory ; even the American war was popular, till disappointment opened the national eyes : in short, it has almost been a general rule. The great reason of this was the funding system, which made it practicable to raise money without sensible burdens. The cure for this national pride, this rageful appetite for glory and conquest, will be to let the people feel the full expense of the bloody game. After this, they will be less disposed to provoke warfare, when they have experienced the effects at their firesides, which they now never do.

As a thirst for warlike predominance has been the political fault ; so, I think, luxury, in the largest sense, is the grand civil vice of England. For this evil (which political philosophers have always set down as one of the last stages in that course by which nations go on to their ruin), I cannot conceive a remedy at once so mild and so efficient as such an universal impost as the present. They now feel a necessity for retrenchment, which they never experienced before. Many will, probably, awake out of their dream of vanity, and will learn, in a school the most instructive, the extreme folly of ostentatious expenditure : and what they com-

mence because they cannot help it, it may be hoped they will continue from conviction.

Let me add, too, the pleasure they will feel, after their political Lent of three years and a half shall be over, in the sensible increase of income that will ensue. My only fear is, that the delight will then intoxicate them, and do away, in a sort of national carnival, the lesson their comparative poverty has taught them.

Enough of politics, for once. Write to me by the next post: I have set you an example. My love to all your house—the love of this family to you.

Yours ever,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND.

August 31. [No date of the year.]

I HAVE been of late strangely omisive in writing to you, but I have been even more so to some others; so that, at this moment, I feel more than one load (it is not, however, a very heavy one) on my mind. One cause of my not writing to you is, that I have very little to say. I know nothing which all the world does not know, as to facts; and, if I reason more profoundly than some others, to what purpose write my lucubrations when they are not over pleasant, and when, after all, they may be profoundly wrong? The truth is, we are, as well as Milton, “fall’n on evil days;” and our

best consolation in them would be what he speaks of in that same delightful passage, when, having described himself—

“ In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude,”

He adds,

“ Yet not alone, while Thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the East.”

But who was this Visitant? we must go back a little to see:—

“ Thou,
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly born,
Before the hills appeared, or fountains flowed,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse:
Wisdom, thy sister; and with her didst play
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song.”

In short, Milton's muse, here nobly described from the 8th chapter of Proverbs, was the Holy Spirit. (This, however, is Milton's addition to Solomon's account; for it is Wisdom the latter describes,—that is, the Eternal *Logos*, as I most soberly understand it.) But, happily, this Divine Spirit is a muse not confined to poets: we need it no less than Milton; and we may have it if we rightly “ask it.”

The picture in Milton is somewhat mythologic, but is warranted by Solomon's language. The poet represents the *Logos* and the Divine Spirit as two delightful children, singing and gaily disporting in the presence of the *Fons Deitatis*, the

Eternal Father. Milton adds the Divine Spirit; for this is strictly Solomon's picture of Wisdom; "Then was I by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before Him." Milton read Hebrew constantly, therefore he takes the literal term. That you may see it to full advantage, I'll transcribe Bishop Lowth's beautiful Latin version of the whole passage.

"Cum Jehovah cœlos ornaret, ego adfui :
 Cum super faciem abyssi circulum describeret ;
 Cum, superne, firmaret æthera ;
 Cum stabiliret abyssi fontes ;
 Cum mari decretum suum ederet,
 Ne aquæ transirent præscriptum limitem ;
 Cum designaret telluris fundamenta,—
 Tum aderam Illi alumna,
 Et eram quotidianæ deliciæ ;
 Coram Illo *ludebam jugiter*,
 Ludebam in orbe terrarum ejus,
 Et deliciæ meæ cum filiis hominum."

See how I have strayed ! and you'll not wonder, when you reflect on the whence and the whither : I wish I could thus wholly stray. But I am obliged to feel that I am rather affording scope to my imagination than giving vent to my heart ; since, being just now obliged to talk to poor — —, who, as usual, talks very weakly, I found such feelings of peevishness in my bosom as have brought me down from my flight, and make me feel myself a poor creature, notwithstanding all my fine talk. But I neither spoke nor looked peevishly (I say this lest you should mistake me).

I am glad of the great alertness* shewn in Derry; but I fear tenableness against more than a rabble is out of the question. The universal zeal of the north is very encouraging. How far the new Bishop of Derry will approve of clergymen becoming soldiers, I doubt—though I never heard his opinion on the subject; but I think he'll dislike it, because it is unseemly and unnecessary. Clergymen have, at all times, duties of an appropriate kind to perform; and their aid never can be as secularly beneficial as their secularising of themselves will be morally pernicious. Extremities, indeed, justify every thing: but extremities are not come; and, even in extremities, clergymen might be better employed in collateral services than in absolute warfare—so, at least, it strikes me.

Farewell, and believe me always

Your truly affectionate friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Dublin, July 20, 1798.

* * * * * At this moment, I suppose, I am set down as in place; but, I assure you, I am but *in transitu*. A pensioner I am, much more

* This remark fixes the year.

than a placeman; but it is, as Young says, "a pensioner on the bounties of an hour:" the next hour may unfit me for any thing.

At the same time, I must own to you, my situation for the time being is not unpleasant. It gives me something to do; it gives me some power to do good-natured things. Every man has it in his power to oblige by courtesy, but no man more than the private secretary of a minister of state. The same civility from him is valued; from another, despised. And there is room for amusing speculation too. It is a vantage-ground, from which the traversings of character and conduct may be well seen. I sit often, at my ease, and look from my window at the ebbing and flowing of the tide of men coming in and going out of the castle-yard, "*velut unda supervenit undam*;" and, like Lucretius' Philosopher, I enjoy it with a calm acquiescence in my own quiet destiny.

"*Suave, mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terrâ magnum alterius spectare laborem.*"

But is this all? It is not. I am gratified (I believe, even, I should be proud did not the sword hang over my head) at being singled out as the confidential friend of the honestest and, perhaps, the ablest statesman that has been in Ireland for a century. I know of him what the world does not and cannot know, and what, if it did know, it most probably would not believe. His letters to England, on the critically important business of this country, pass through my hands frequently; and I am

strongly inclined to think that to them we greatly owe the promptitude of England to assist us. Humane he is, and good-natured beyond the usual standard of men. In him it is not merely a habit, or a natural quality ; but it is a moral duty. And yet, when firm decision is requisite, he can well exert it. What is best of all, he is in reality what, perhaps, Secretary Craggs was only in the encomiastic verse of Pope,—“statesman, yet friend to truth.” Even I may say any thing when I am supported by reason.

His public conduct has gained him the approbation of all good and moderate men. He has appeared, in this political hurricane, not like Addison’s angel, merely directing the storm of just vengeance, but rather like the angel who guided the Ark of Noah through the deluge—shedding, from the very serenity of his countenance, a ray of hopeful brightness over the dark and troubled waters. In many instances, loyalty has become impetuous ; and his has been the happy energy to moderate and restrain it.

There is no bloodshed for which he does not grieve ; and yet he has no tendency to injudicious mercy. I had a striking instance of this, the other day, when the Sheareses sent to entreat for mercy. It was I who conveyed the message from the ordinary of Newgate ; and I was present at the consequent conversation between Lord Castlereagh and the Attorney-General.

The manner in which the case was considered, and the motives which decided it, were interesting in the highest degree ; because they were the

result of the soundest wisdom, and the most genuine humanity.

I shall not, therefore, be sorry, should God spare me for any length of time in this world, that I have been, for a short period, a courtier. It has served even already my knowledge; has given me new views; and, perhaps, would soon give me even a stronger habit of thinking. But, should it pass away to-morrow, the recollection will not be useless nor unpleasant.

Why have I written you so long a letter now, and not a line before? Because this is, I believe, the first afternoon, this fortnight, which I have had to myself: and I seize this opportunity to prove to you, by my endeavour to amuse a sick man, that I never would willingly neglect him.

Yours, most truly,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dublin, 1799. [No date.]

I RECEIVED, and am thankful for, both your letters. This country is now so quiet, that it affords no stimulus to epistolary communication; and, therefore, having nothing to say particular, I have put off writing from day to day. I am afraid I cannot send you a copy of my letter on the Union.

Various reasons, or rather obstacles, prevent my sitting down to revise and correct it; and, as it now stands, a first rude draught, it is really unfit for any man's perusal.

I have no ambition to get the character of Hibernian slovenliness in composition; besides, I am sick of politics. My bad health and weak spirits warn me to keep aloof from them as much as possible, and sufficiently suggest (would to God I could follow the suggestion), that the only safe and happy politics are those of St. Paul, 'Ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει. (Phil. iii. 20.)

And yet, so it happens, that, in spite of myself, *mensor civilibus undis*; only, I do not plunge into them unnecessarily; which, however, I almost think would be the case, were I to write upon the Union, the subject being so abundantly handled; and, at least, by some abler hands: I say some, because I hate affectation. There are Union writers with whom I am not humble enough (that, however, is an improper expression, because humility does not a bit imply ignorance of a man's own attainments; I will, therefore, say, not low enough in my own eyes) to feel myself on a par.

Dr. John Kearney, the vice-provost, is recommended by the lord-lieutenant to succeed as provost; therefore, no doubt is entertained of his succeeding. It was highly honourable to the government to act thus right, when the pressure of circumstances might have seemed to intimate the necessity of turning it to a political account. Government has, by this means, secured the approbation and confidence of all except a few old razor-

face'd hacks, who presume to say that government has played the fool.

It has just struck twelve; therefore I have only time to bid you good night. One word more I must add; I have some thoughts of going to England, and soon. If I go, as I may be unable to fix any thing before hand, I will write to you on my landing; that, if you can, you may meet me wherever I fix myself.

Truly yours, half asleep,

A. K.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

June 1st, 1799.

* * * I think, please God, I shall see England in the course of the summer, and, possibly, may go to the metropolis; for, to me, who rejoice not in theatres, drawing-rooms, operas, nor, indeed, in any of the pomps and vanities of this fantastic world, summer would be just as good a time as any other.

July 16th, 1799.

* * * You have the goodness to express a hope of spending part of the summer with me, in some part of England. If this should be at all, it ought to be soon; and, indeed, my state of health calls for it speedily. I am really very ill.

I have, therefore, formed a plan to go to England in a very few days, to apprise you of my landing, and to beseech you to meet me at some midway rendezvous, between Chester and London.

* * * If you can conveniently do this, you may, with God's blessing, do me essential service. I know my case is of that kind, in which change of air and scene, and continued exercise, may do more than all the medicines in the world; and, from various reasons, I know no one with whom I could use these means of health so comfortably as with yourself.

I am neither externally whimsical, nor am I a bit bad-tempered; and yet, I have such peculiar feelings, as to subject me to uneasinesses unlike those of the rest of the world. To you I could impart these uneasinesses with freedom; to most others, it would be impossible; and an opportunity of free disclosure is, to one in my state, invaluable.

I know you love to do good; and, not least, to do good to me. If, then, it be in your power, put yourself in readiness to comply with my summons.

August.

I enclose a sketch of an address to absentee Irish proprietors, which I drew up at the desire (instance, I should say,) of your indefatigable uncle, Alcock. You will do well to consider it yourself, and ask a few opinions on it. If it should be judged not to the purpose, it may be altered. I had only a few struck off, merely to be considered,

and have kept the types standing, that any alteration may be admitted.

Yours, most truly,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSON,

August 16th, 1799, Northwich,
25 miles from Chester.

You expressed so kind an anxiety to hear about me, that I should be ungrateful if I omitted writing you a line. My health and spirits are, hitherto, bettered by my journey: I eat and sleep better than before. Already I am an hundred and fifteen miles from Holyhead; and I certainly should not have believed any human being, that I should have borne it so comfortably. How I may be to-morrow, I know not; but I hope all will be for the best. I certainly fear health more than sickness; but I wish to fear neither; in fact, I wish to fear nothing but God. In that sense, and that only, "is the man blessed who feareth alway." Oh, God, grant that I may always so fear!

Yours, most truly,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. ALCOCK.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Matlock, Bath, Sept. 17, 1799.

* * * * I have been now more than a month from Ireland; and, I think, I can form a better judgment of myself, by much, than before I made this excursion. I am clearly better; and yet not radically convalescent. I have had no very serious attack of low-spiritedness since I left Ireland, but I feel enough to convince me that it is still hanging about me; though I have less apprehension, now, of its ever becoming permanent: troublesome, I apprehend, it will and must be. But my mind (I mean my animal spirits and imagination) are so radically mutable, that I do not believe they will, at any time, long wear one livery. If it be night for a time, the morning will follow: not a bright morning, unquestionably, but such as will, at least, make life supportable, and, perhaps, eventually, happier for me than if I had had more sunshine. "Sancho," said Don Quixote, "whether shall we mark this day with chalk or charcoal?" "With neither, master," says Sancho, "if you'll be ruled by me; but with good brown ochre." With me there is, as yet, something worse than this colouring of sober brown. There are deep strokes, every now and then, of charcoal. But I do not despair of being able, at length, so to blend the colours, as to attain, at least, a deeper shade of the ochre, if nothing better should fall to my lot.

I am still, however, of the same kind of humour,—I mean, of preferring my particular kind of lowness to any other. I have more and more reason to be thankful that my anxieties are not about this world; for, with all soberness of mind, and with all the increased cheerfulness induced by change of scene, exercise, company, and a fortnight's residence in one of the loveliest spots in the British Empire, I still persevere in asserting that my religious anxieties (however partly hypochondriacal they may have been) were well worth suffering, for the sake of the interchanges of sweet serenity and exalted hope: and sorry should I be—nay, I should deprecate as the worst of evils,—that I should recover of the one, at the expense of losing the other.

I was extremely ill when I left Ireland, and continued so until I went on from Bangor ferry. The bold scenery of the Welsh mountains, at length, caught my fancy; and I began to feel some little revival. This increased as I travelled forward through Flintshire, where the marks of human happiness that appeared all around, solaced my spirits and cheered my heart. Considering my state on leaving Ireland, I became wonderfully comfortable; and was actually capable of relishing and attending to every object that was interesting.

From Buxton, after ten days' stay, I proceeded to Castleton; where I went to the extremity of the famous Cavern of Peaks Hole. I had with me two pleasant men—George Knox, the ex-commissioner, and William Smyth, the unionist; and was a good deal amused with my subterraneous

journey. They parted from me the next day, when I went on to Chatsworth; and, thence, the day after, came hither, where I shall have been three weeks, if I live till the day after to-morrow. I again met George Knox here; and he and I lived together till he went on to London.

To the beauties of this place, written description could do no manner of justice: so picturesque a spot I never before beheld. Perhaps you have been here: if so, you need not have the impression revived, for you could not lose it: and if you have not been here, you can have no idea of it. The Dargle, Glyn of the Downs, or any other scenes in the county of Wicklow, are tame and flat compared to it: it is absolute Fairy Land.

I am undetermined as to my future movements. I believe I shall leave this on Friday, and go to Rotherham, in Yorkshire, to spend a day or two with a worthy gentleman who has been so good as to take a liking to me, and who leaves this to-morrow. I shall then take a tour southward; and, after viewing here some of the wildest, shall take a look at some of the richest, parts of the kingdom. What I shall do then must depend upon feeling. I sincerely hope you are well: no one wishes you better than

Yours, most truly,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

EXTRACT FROM FRAGMENTARY PAPERS OF
A DIARY.

Shrewsbury, Nov. 16th, 1799.

I AM, this day, so clearly worse than I have been yet, that I can expect nothing but that my disorder will increase to a height of which I am now incapable of forming an idea. There is but one way in which I can have relief; and that seems further from me than ever. A serious sense of religion would remove all my uneasinesses at once: but of this I seem to myself to grow, every day, almost every hour, less and less susceptible.

I cannot be an adequate judge of my own case; but, as far as I can judge, I have little room for comfort. If I could now look back on a life of religion, I might fairly attribute my present feelings to disease; but I cannot derive this satisfaction from a review of my conduct. Religion has, for the last two years, been much in my thoughts and in my affections; but I had always the consciousness of an unchanged heart: I was never convinced of sin; never evangelically humbled; never had a believing view of the Redeemer; never was thoroughly ready to part with all for the pearl of great price. I have had strong desires, great anxieties of mind, an earnest wish that God should make me a Christian; but never was thoroughly disposed to take the steps necessary on my own part. I certainly watched against sin; I think, in general, against internal as well as

external sin; and my delicacy of inward feeling, in this respect, was such, that the rising of a proud or worldly thought discomposed and ruffled me instantly: I mean, it made me unhappy to feel such a thing in me. But, still I was afraid; and now I think the event is verifying that I had no root in myself.

What strengthens my belief in this respect is, that my feelings of religion never led me to seek the public means of grace, nor much to relish them when I joined in them. I went to church and endeavoured faintly to join in prayer; but I had no thirst for the water of life. Let me hear what preachers soever, I heard them coldly; and often my uneasinesses were increased. I had in me the evil heart of unbelief; and the word only profits in proportion as it is mixed with faith in those that hear.

The only means of grace that I used with satisfaction were reading and private prayer. In the latter I was a good deal engaged; retiring, generally, many times in a day, but seldom continuing longer than ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour at most, at a time. And often I thought I could appeal to God for my oneness of desire after true religion. In prayer, too, I often had sensible enlargement; often knelt down in darkness and distress, and was obliged, frequently, before I rose, to thank God for a little softening—a dawn, as it were, of consolation. Reading, too, I often found relief and pleasure in; particularly books of the spiritual kind, describing the exercises of a Christian's heart. In reading these, I used to

feel glows of good desire, which always brought comfort. Pious biography, such as Burnet's "Life of Hale," and Doddridge's "Life of Colonel Gardiner," I read with much satisfaction; and, I once hoped, with profit.

But still, as I said, my religion rested chiefly in desire: I stuck at the first stage, like those, in the Prophet, who are brought to the birth, but there is not strength to bring forth. I often thought I loved God, as far as love could be implied in desire: I desired that the fear of God should rule, and the love of God should animate my heart; and in these, undoubtedly, I saw not only the perfection of, but the only true, happiness. I felt neither the fear of God, nor the love of God, in that fixed practical manner which constitutes the life of religion; but I must say, that, for the space of nearly twelve months, I so valued these tempers, as comparatively to value nothing else.

I think, too, I may say I had no bosom sin which I wished to have spared. I really loved no sin. My happiness appeared to me to lie in pure goodness, in communion with God, and in a ready disposition to keep all his commandments. This state of mind, therefore, was my one object; I was easy about health, or life, or the world, provided this religion of the heart were to be my portion. When these desires were strongest in me, I was happiest; and became unhappy in proportion as they declined.

But, in all these desires, there was much, if not an entire, working of fancy. I combined, with

religious feelings and tempers, the idea of happiness; and wished for those, that I might be happy. I was always conscious that I had no view to God's glory, nor any right sense of my own misery through sin; but I had, certainly, no worldly end: I had not even an idea of happiness without religion. Every thing else that I could at all desire, appeared to me but a body, of which religion must be the soul.

In these times, there was much inequality in my feelings: my comforts, and even (to my apprehension) my desires, would go off in a moment; and darkness, deadness, and confusion, would take place. I remember to have spent nights in Dublin, without the consciousness of a religious feeling, as if in mental torpor in that particular respect; when, perhaps, towards morning the desire would revive, and a little comfort, of course, return. Often I have knelt down to prayer in an earnest frame of mind, and a thought would start up, and so unhinge my mind instantly, as to make any comfortable performance of the duty impossible.

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO THE
REV. DR. ALCOCK.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Shrewsbury, Nov. 8, 1799.

I HAVE had it in view to write to you for several days past. I wrote to Mr. Watson, immediately on receipt of yours, giving my full approbation of the Bishop of Ferns' suggestion. I really consented to this alteration with all my heart; as I dearly love abbreviation, and have many a time thrown things out, neck and heels, at a much less respectable hint than that of the good bishop.

I am sorry to tell you, that, whatever hopes of amendment I entertained shortly ago, are now nearly overthrown. The cold weather has attacked already my irritable nerves with such rude violence, as to make me, on the whole, as bad as ever. My case is a very distressing one.

"The spirit of a man may bear his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?" How I understand these last words! Indeed, both first and last: for I have felt, occasionally, that a whole spirit is a *murus aheneus*.

The thing called religious melancholy may be, for aught I know, a real disease. But I do not think that it is my disease: I rather believe that religion is my master passion; and that, of course, my bad nerves work upon that, as in a covetous man they would produce apprehensions of dying a beggar. My views of religion, when my mind is unclouded, all are cheerful and happy. I see it as a divine combination of every thing that tends to exalt and to enrich human nature; and I cannot

form (I hardly think I am disposed to form) any idea of comfort, even for one moment, without it. But, when I think my religion is declining, that thought is my misery. Had not my disorder this power over me, it would be as harmless to me as the serpent was to St. Paul.

I think I shall try Bath. I am not much inclined to grow tired of a place: I, rather, become more attached to it, and am loath to move. We have been living at an inn since Saturday; but George Schoales, who wrote to you yesterday, has, no doubt, told you what contributed to make it agreeable. He adheres to me with persevering kindness; and, in doing so, he is exercising both "brotherly kindness and charity." Ill off as I am, I should be much worse but for such a friend.

This letter is not a pleasant one; but I hope you'll account it better than none. It is, at least, an expression of the unchangeable regard and love with which I am, at all times, and in all circumstances,

Ever yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Shrewsbury, Nov. 17, 1799.
Sunday evening.

I WAS sincerely concerned to learn that you have been prevented from coming to Dublin by a severe cold and rheumatism. I myself have felt so much

already from the keenness of the winds, that I can easily conceive how sufficient they are to excite an insurrection in any constitution where there is either weakness in the governing powers, or disaffection in the subordinate parts. But I know also (I only wish I knew it more habitually and permanently) that disease does not, necessarily, destroy happiness.

If we are not wanting to ourselves, we may derive advantage from every situation. But there is something in indisposition (when it is not extremely painful) that has a tendency to sober the mind, to withdraw it from inferior satisfactions, and almost to force it to have recourse, not to the streams (which are, so often, either muddy or dry), but to the source and spring. For my own part, my ideas of real comfort are so much more associated with sickness than with health, that I am almost made uneasy by the idea of the latter. I do not wish for it,—nay, I almost deprecate it. This, perhaps, is distrust in God; I fear it is: but “the heart knoweth its own bitterness;” and I have infinitely more bitter reflections to make on my times of health than of sickness. It is, in my mind, excellently arranged in our Litany, “in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth:” the position of the expressions indicating a climax, and, of course, teaching, in the strongest manner, that prosperity is only to be feared less than death and judgment.

I am, at this moment, writing on Richard Baxter’s “Account of his own Life;” which I could

wish you had this night in your possession. Many parts would so please you as to drive off your rheumatism. It contains every species of important matter, theoretical and practical, theological, moral, political, and historical. It is a close printed folio of, I suppose, seven hundred pages. But, what is the most remarkable circumstance in the whole, is, that he should have achieved such unexampled labours in such wretched health. Unless you were to read his own account of himself, you could have no idea of his continued sufferings; and it is next to a miracle, that he should have made his way through such pains and weaknesses, to such an age as seventy-six. "From the age," says he, "of twenty-one till near twenty-three, my weakness was so great, that I expected not to live a year; and, my own soul being under the serious impression of matters of another world, I was exceeding desirous to communicate those apprehensions to such ignorant, presumptuous, careless sinners, as the world abounds with."

Such was, in part, the originating cause of that pious ardour which distinguishes his practical writings. You see, from the dedication of his "Saints, everlasting Rest," in particular, that he wrote it under extreme weakness, and near apprehension of death. Such are the advantages which arise from indifferent health. If I meet a copy of this work, I will send it to you.

The one which I have mentioned as now before me, belongs to the Rev. Mr. Thomas Stedman, a worthy clergyman of this town. He has been,

though not an author, a most useful publisher ; and, by that, I knew something of him before I came hither. We have experienced much kind attention from him. I suppose the church service is no where more soberly performed than in his church in this town (St. Chad's). He is, also, a useful, conscientious preacher. His best known publication is Dr. Doddridge's Letters. He has, also, published a most useful collection of letters to himself, from Mr. Orton,—a liberal, pious, and wise Presbyterian minister. I got a copy of these from Mr. Browne, and intended, at first, to send them to you : but, writing to the Bishop of Kilmore, the evening after I came here, and not doubting but I should get as many sets here as I chose, I sent them to him ; and, when I inquired the next day, found they were out of print. There is, however, a second edition now at press ; to which will be added a second volume of Letters to Mr. Stedman from Sir James Stonehouse. When these come out, we'll take care they shall be sent to you.

I got, also, from Mr. Stedman, a book which pleased me very much—Memoirs of Mark Hildesley, bishop of Sodor and Man. His memoirs are by much the smallest part ; but there are numberless curious and interesting papers, in which I think you will have much satisfaction. You will recognise Bishop Hildesley as a kindred spirit—he having laboured, like yourself, to extend the knowledge of the Scriptures. You will, also, be delighted with Dr. Johnson's letter at page 431.

Probably, however, you have read this last already ;
as, I think, Boswell gives it in Johnson's Life.

* * * * *

Farewell, my worthy friend ; and believe me

Most affectionately and lastingly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

P.S. The date of Dr. Johnson's letter is the
13th of August, 1766, by which you may find it in
Boswell. Some parts of this would have been the
best address to absentees.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM THE SAME TO
THE REV. THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bristol Hotwells, Dec. 10th, 1799.

* * * * * To the kindness of your letter I can
make no adequate return. I wish I could agree
with you in the opinion you have formed of me ;
but, I assure you, I must advance much in goodness
before I can be conscious of realising, in any
degree, your kind, but too partial idea. Had I
happened to write yesterday, my remarks on this
part of your letter would have been much more
despondent ; but this has been one of my tolerable
days. But, indeed, I am beset with trials and
difficulties ; and whether I am yet to be ranked
with the " wise " or " foolish virgins," is to me a

matter of deep and awful doubt. If, however, this doubt inspired habitual practical anxiety to make my calling and election sure, I should take even this to be a sign of something radically good. Even this consolation I cannot yet grasp. May God lead me by a way which I know not !

I have met Adam Clarke* (whom you once mentioned to me) here in Bristol. I believe I told you that he is a countryman of mine ; and I have been gratified to find him a very respectable kind

* The following letter, which reflects equal credit on the writer and on the person to whom he writes, is curiously characteristic, and deeply interesting. It is one of the very few from Dr. Adam Clarke to Mr. Knox which I have found among a mass of miscellaneous papers. I have given it, as illustrative of the honest warmth with which Dr. Clarke avows at once his obligations, his feelings, and his sentiments. After the fears which Mr. Knox had entertained in 1799, with what pleasure must he have read the cordial profession of a better creed, at a time when the increasing wisdom of two-and-twenty additional years had matured his friend's ecclesiastical principles.

“ DEAR MR. KNOX,

“ Mr. Cooke's, Ormond Quay,
June 11, 1821.

“ You have done me sufficient honour in stating your desire to see me, and your intention of coming into Dublin for that purpose. You are now one of the oldest friends I have in the world. I well remember the time when you took pains to direct my inexperienced youth in the right way. That I have laboured to cultivate my mind in useful knowledge, and in any part of sound and ornamental literature, I owe principally to the excitement and directions I have received from you. I have ever looked up to you with affectionate respect and reverence. I still love you, as far as my high respect and reverence for a superior mind will permit. The differences between us, which chiefly respected church government, we have discussed with mutual good-temper and respect ; and I should have called my heart scoundrel, if, on account of those, I had loved and revered the guide of my youth less. Many times it has been my wish to be in the place of your valet, that I might hear and treasure up sayings, judgments, and opinions, which I have ever regretted should be lost to the world. You cannot, my dear sir, suspect this of flattery. I am now become an old man ; and both you and myself are beyond the limits to which the desire of the eye and the pride of life extend their influence and domination.

of man—wonderfully well versed in biblical learning, and appearing neither deficient nor superficial upon any subject on which we conversed. I was the more pleased with this, as I happened to be one of the links in that almost providential chain which has led him into his present situation. He is also a philosopher; and how he has either found time to acquire the knowledge he possesses, or money to purchase his very well chosen little library, and also his philosophical apparatus, is to

Yet I feel I still need your counsel, and am sure I could profit much by your advice. God has condescended to give me some influence among my people: I have used this, and am using it, in such a way as I believe best calculated to answer the end of our venerable Founder, and help to fill up the gigantic, yet highly proportioned outline which his heavenly mind and more than apostolic labour have traced out. To the state I am a warm-hearted friend: the accompanying discourse I have written to set my deluded countrymen (the Lancashires) right on a subject of great importance. You will see that it is well intentioned, whatever the execution maybe. To the Church of England my attachment is strong and energetic; and my reverence for the founder of Methodism as great as, perhaps, it ought to be. The doctrines of Methodism I know to be of God; and, therefore, I believe, preach, and defend them. Whether right or wrong, dissenterism, in all its principles, bearings, and tendencies, is wholly alien to my creed and feeling. I believe I am a Methodist of the old school, and my generation is passing fast away; but our influence will remain. I can say to *you* that the attachment of the Methodist body to the Established Church is now greater than I ever knew it, though I have been a preacher in the connexion for upwards of forty years. There are glorious days at hand: I perceive a great era approaching, which I shall not live to see. The Conference have requested me to draw up a Life of Mr. Wesley: I am very inadequate, but will attempt it, if spared. To Mr. W.'s character justice has never been done: I wish, if possible, to do it.

“O mihi, tam longæ maneat pars ultima vitæ,
Spiritus, et quantum sat erit tua dicere facta!”

“I am, dear Mr. KNOX, your very affectionate

“ADAM CLARKE.

“P. S. I write with a miserable metal pen, which makes my bad writing yet worse.”

me a mystery. With respect to both, I cannot help thinking him an extraordinary man. My only fault in his character is, that he is a new-fashioned Methodist, and, I am afraid, zealous on that side of the question. I cannot hope to reform him; and therefore shall only give him my friendly opinion on points where I think him wrong.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Hotwells, Jan. 14th, 1800.

I AM still lingering, and still doubtful: though I should have no doubt but for my bad spirits; for the danger from my mere complaints is certainly over, unless I bring it back by my wicked ingenuity in the art of self-tormenting. My disorder has now turned out to be—or, at least, turned into,—unfixed gout; and, at this instant, I am in the most acute pain with it in my right foot. If it would stay there, all would be well; but it dances every way, and, what is worst of all, sometimes to my head. I get little or no rest from pain; only, in the morning, dozing overcomes me. I assure you I am groaning while I write; but still I would write, lying on my back and holding the paper in my hand. My love to your mother.

Truly yours,

A. KNOX.

I sometimes get up, and go into the drawing-room, and have had intervals of better spirits : but I have no advantages : I am peculiarly low to-day. I don't see *how* I am to grow better, but I may grow better notwithstanding. The first is the voice of feeling—the latter, of common sense.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Hotwells, Jan. 15th, 1800.

YESTERDAY I wrote you a few lines from my bed ; to-day I write in the usual posture. My physician called on me earlier than usual : he ordered me out of bed ; I obeyed ; and am not the worse for having done so. I told you I should now be pretty well, but for my old complaints. It is even so. I feel nothing material would, at this moment, ail me, if I had only common sense ; but the want of common sense retards my recovery, represses my growing appetite, and robs me of my sleep. Still, through all, it seems as if I were struggling toward convalescence. So far for myself : enough, and more than enough, on such a subject.

This, in your city, is a busy moment. I do not know but it is well for me to be kept at a distance, even by so severe a restraint : at least, I cannot, unwell as I am, contemplate the distant movements with any thing like a wish to be among them. Not but I should like well enough to be a mere spec-

tator ; but an actor, such as I must have been, if there at all, is another matter, and, on various accounts, not to my taste. Providence never intended me for a bustler, nor a pusher through a crowd, and least of all for a whipper-in of lagging or straying members of parliament ; so that, you see, something like a consolatory thought can attach itself even to my present circumstances,—I mean the shunning, by those circumstances, a situation not, perhaps, otherwise honourably to be shunned.

I am at this minute in such severe pain that I must break off. The gouty pains, which were absent during the morning, have returned to my feet with the rudest violence ; so that I was actually obliged to stop, to give vent to my moans.

My love to your mother.

Believe me most truly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

CONTINUATION OF DIARY.

Jan. 16th, 1800.

I WAS early, very early, called by the working of God's Spirit on my heart ; and, even in my boyhood, was led to acquire an uncommon knowledge of the Scripture : but I did not fall in with those calls, nor act according to my light. I now see that, in the most literal sense, I have been a transgressor from the womb.

Natural dispositions are mysterious things : I think, for the purposes of religion, mine has been the worst that ever was in man. I fear I am making this remark to throw blame off my will, on my nature ; that is, to excuse myself, even though I accuse God.

I was once strongly impregnated with evangelical* religion, but it was from the mere pressure of affliction ; and, as that grew lighter, the other lessened apace : but the hold was assuredly strong, for it required the increasing deviations of years entirely to suppress it.

The whole course of my life, from the period I mention, in which Divine grace seemed to have taken a hold of my heart, until almost the present hour, has been marked with tempting circumstances, peculiarly fitted to destroy me.

Temptation after temptation drew me, by degrees, from my fear of God, and my early practice of private prayer : my taste for religion decreased ; I began to love company—to love talking on worldly subjects, until I launched out into the world.

It was my misfortune to be bred to no business ; and, of course, I had the disposal of every day upon my hands. This, with right grace, would have been a blessing : to me, as it was, it was the greatest of curses ; it forced me, as it were, upon the world. I had also, naturally, a most active mind, which sickened when not fully occupied. This, combined with my want of employ-

* For Mr. Knox's acceptance of this term, see letter of Feb. 13th, 1804.

ment, produced increasing languor and low-spirit-
edness, and became to me the source of infinite
evil. No doubt, had I been faithful to God's calls,
He would have made even this work together for
my good.

Never was there a more ambitious heart than
mine; and the devil was permitted (no doubt in
strict and awful justice permitted) to meet this dis-
position with peculiarly adapted temptations. The
political movements about parliamentary reform
began in the north of Ireland. Some busy men
set themselves to cultivate me; I caught at the
bait, and became a politician. I had talents for
public speaking, which God, no doubt, gave me,
originally, for a very different purpose; and these
I began to shew forth, with the fulness of pride
and vanity, at public meetings. This indulgence to
pride laid me more open to the baits of pleasure.
I went more and more into company: when I did
not, low-spiritedness made me wretched.

I was led to associate with persons, the fittest,
above all in my neighbourhood, to feed my reign-
ing desires,—to whet both my love of pleasure
and my ambition. These persons sought me; and,
though their friendship has been a snare to me, it
would be ungrateful to deny that they did it in
kindness. But I was ever ready to fall in with
them. "Here will I dwell," said my apostate
heart, "for I have a delight therein."

In the year 1797, a sharper affliction than ever
came upon me,—a nervous attack, accompanied
with sleeplessness. I was then at the house of a

friend, twenty miles from Derry. I went to Derry for medical advice, which availed nothing: my complaints increased. I fell into black despair; but it was not stupid despair, like what I now feel. It led me to pray; but I found no relief for some days. I then, in my distress, went to the Methodist preacher; my pains having so far brought down my pride. His conversation brought me the first ease. I then began to pray with some hope: and I remember well, that, being still sleepless, I spent a whole night in reading and praying; and thought, when the morning came, that it could not have been so comfortable if I had spent the night sleeping.

But these feelings, in a few days, subsided also. Still, however, a seriousness remained, which I had not had for years; though not that uniform, practical seriousness, which implies a real work of God.

From that time, however, the lusts of the flesh had dominion over me no longer. I watched continually against their incursion, and I was permitted to be successful; for I am not conscious that, since that period, I harboured, at any time, an impure thought for a single moment. I even "made a covenant with my eyes," and was permitted to adhere to it. My imagination was still ready to take fire, but I was strangely enabled to quench every spark.

It was then Lord Castlereagh proposed to me to be one of his secretaries. I feared to comply, lest I should again be drawn into the world. He pressed; and I, thinking that, in my circumstances,

it would be madness to refuse such an offer, at length consented. That very night the rebellion broke out.

Perhaps this latter circumstance contributed to prevent my being so much hurt by this new situation as I might naturally have expected. It certainly tended to keep up my seriousness; and, during that summer, I think I passed the most comfortable time I ever had experienced. I generally felt something of the fear of God; often had something of what I then hoped was the spirit of prayer; felt strong desires after holiness; was more frequent, as well as more fervent, in private prayer; and often was constrained to thank God for comfortable enlargements. I made a conscience of watching over my tempers and my words; and actually began to think that the time was at length approaching in which my wanderings were to end, and that God was, even then, graciously drawing me effectually to Himself. This was my happiest reflection; as my most painful one was, lest I should, after all, be mistaken.

At length, the rebellion was crushed: danger was over, and I began to fear for my seriousness. I thought I already perceived a declension; and I dreaded the world, especially in my particular circumstances. I felt much distressful apprehension; and I used to pray, "O God, do any thing with me; but save my soul! Save me, by whatever means, from the world. Afflict me, and sanctify that affliction."

I caught cold about this time, and was seized with another severe nervous disorder. One night,

I thought I was going to die ; and I saw the moment, as I thought, approach without any painful apprehension. I imagined nothing but the grace of God could have kept me as I had been kept for the last twelve months ; and that, after having so kept me in a state of conscientious watchfulness, amid great temptations, He would hardly suffer me to perish.

My nervous complaints increased, with attacks of actual melancholy. But I hoped it was all for good, to wean me effectually from the world ; so that, had the offer of a complete recovery been made me, I think I should have been afraid to accept it. I prayed, earnestly and frequently, for that holiness without which no man can see the Lord ; and I think I can safely say, that, if return to complete health and spirits, and all the happiness of earth, lay on the one hand, and the effectual grace of Christ on the other, I should have grasped at the latter without a moment's hesitation, and have been willing to make any sacrifice to secure it. Still, my seasons of painful deadness were much longer and more frequent than my seasons of devotion.

Still I prayed, as I thought, earnestly and sincerely ; and I endeavoured to watch over my thoughts as well as my words. I pleased myself in thinking that I had got a great power over my tempers ; being able, from a wish to act conformably to God's will, to suppress all angry expressions, and, I hoped, almost angry feelings.

I thought, too, that I was experiencing, by means of my affliction, a growing deadness to the

world ; and I even believed that religion had now taken such a hold on my heart, as could never entirely be loosed. In this thought I delighted ; for it seemed to me that my very inmost soul loved goodness.

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO
MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSON,

Hotwells, Feb. 14, 1800.

YESTERDAY I received your letter, for which I thank you cordially. Your news is most acceptable. I am not discouraged at any thing I hear. I am sure government will proceed, let the defections be ever so numerous : for a majority they will still have, in spite of both corruption and cowardice ; and, let that majority be ever so small, having truth and reason with them, so many of the most sensible and disinterested men in Ireland on their side, and the strength of the British empire at their back, they would deserve to be hung up as monuments of folly and weakness, if they were deterred from their purpose by the clamour of narrow-minded, interested lawyers, or the rude roar of a frantic populace. I have the pleasure of thinking that neither Lord Cornwallis nor Lord Castlereagh are very subject either to trepidation or versatility ; and their friend, Mr. Pitt, will be as little disposed as either of them to give up Ireland to the government of selfishness and prejudice.

I am gaining ground as to my late complaints; but far from good spirits. I almost fear nothing will assist me in this respect but time; and I must own that my late recovery does encourage me no little. Yet I am strangely unhappy. But I combat gloomy thoughts as well as I can, in which quietness and retirement aid me more than you can imagine. Nothing, I am sure, could be so hurtful to me as being in the bustle of resort. I assure you I am far better able to make battle with my bad spirits here than I was in Dublin, and I know no reason but my living more in retirement. The root of all my unhappiness is, that I am not as good as I should be. Never was there a truer saying than that of St. Peter—"Who will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good?"

Farewell! My love to your mother.

Believe me most truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. T. STEDMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

Hotwells, Feb. 15, 1800.

I RECEIVED your second letter on Tuesday evening, and had resolved to answer it immediately; but a torrent of Irish news burst in upon me, the next morning, with such impetuous force, that it swept

away my fairly formed purpose ; and, indeed, for some days, occupied my thoughts so as to leave room for little else. Besides, it was necessary for me to write some voluminous letters to Ireland ; so that, until this morning, I have not been master of my time.

My illness, I believe, you heard from Mr. Schoales. It was extremely severe—beyond any thing I ever suffered ; and I cannot yet boast of a perfect recovery. My spirits are still incalculably variable ; never high, seldom solidly comfortable—I fear I can scarcely say, ever : sometimes, however, tolerably tranquil ; but often (painfully often) oppressed, gloomy, and distressingly apprehensive of the worst things which can befall human nature, either here or hereafter. Still, however, I endeavour to combat the phantoms : and, though my difficulties are great, and my hopes often fail, yet, I think, I have rather more power of making efforts than I had when with you ; and the consequence is, that, on the whole, I have rather more mental quiet. What a strange thing the human frame is ; and what an uncommonly strange one is mine ! Perhaps, however, it is, on the whole, the fittest state for me to be in. Surely, the saying of our Lord to St. Peter is of wide application,—“ What I do, thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter.” One thing I am sure of—that, if it is not my own fault, good will arise from even my mysterious sufferings.

I am much gratified by Mrs. More’s kind reception of so trifling an act of attention, and shall account an acquaintance with her as a most

valuable acquisition. In a very few days I hope to be over to see you; and, if Mr. Hazard can accommodate us, I think of resting for a few days with you. I am only waiting to be a little stronger, — my weakness from my illness having been very great.

I have had great satisfaction in reading Grove. In several respects I think him one of the most valuable writers in the English language. I wish you would mention him to Mrs. More: I take for granted she is acquainted with him; but, if she should not have met with him, I think she will read him with much pleasure. Daubeny's attack is shameful: it is unfounded, even to stupidity. Were I in good spirits, I should refute him myself. He has, I know, been answered, but on Calvinistic principles: I would prove him erroneous on a broader ground.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Your ever obliged friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

Bath, Feb. 20, 1800.

* * * * * Yesterday evening I ought to have been a pleasant one to me: I drank coffee with Mrs. Hannah More. She had the

goodness to wish that I should visit her, and I had a most kind reception. She far exceeded my expectation in pleasant manners and interesting conversation: she is lively, fluent, easy, cheerful, and entirely unassuming and unaffected. I have never seen a superior woman.

I should really be glad if I could go, shortly, to Dublin: I have a strong inclination, but I have also just and well-grounded fears. I do not think I am even so well here as I was in the greater quiet of Bristol. And I fear for the future!

Farewell.

Believe me most truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

EXTRACTS.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

Feb. 24.

SOME parts of my evenings are spent very pleasantly; for instance, Saturday evening last, which I spent in another visit, on invitation, to Mrs. Hannah More. And, yesterday evening, I heard, certainly, the best extempore preacher I ever heard — Mr. Jay, who has a meeting-house of his own in Argyle Buildings, and is attended by vast numbers of all persuasions. He is now a most accomplished preacher, and his private character is as respectable as his public labours.

* * * * *

Feb. 28, 1800.

Yesterday, I dined with a lady I had never seen before, but from whom I met a wonderfully cordial reception. She is a woman of rank rather than fashion, and of great respectability. We staid till half after eleven o'clock; and all that lessened my satisfaction was, the consciousness of having talked too much. In all situations I have some blame to lay on myself.

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO THE
REV. T. STEDMAN.

March 12, 1800.

Two circumstances connected with my illness I have reason to look back upon with satisfaction. One was, that I was taken ill at a place where I had the best medical attendants, with whom I had been acquainted five years before, and one of them had conceived a particular regard for me. The other circumstance was, that I had with me so kind a friend as Mr. Schoales. I am sure, had I been his brother, he could not have been more tenderly solicitous about me. Horace says, "*Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.*" I suppose he meant only the *sana mens*; but, certainly, the value of a friend can be but half known *in corpore sano*. Indeed, whether in sickness or in health, my obligations to Mr. Schoales, for his continued unabating kindness, are not to be expressed. I have

not only occupied his time, and led him to sacrifice much real gratification, but I am conscious that, from my state of health, I must often have put his patience to the trial. But his good-nature and his friendship have been invincible.

* * * * *

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSON,

Bath, March 17th, 1800.

I RECEIVED your kind letter of the 11th, on Saturday night, after returning from Mrs. More's, where we dined. It is really astonishing how a person acquires acquaintances in this place: when I came hither, I had scarcely an idea of forming a new acquaintance with any one but Mrs. More; and, in her case, my hope was confined to a single visit or so; but so it has happened, that we have had more invitations than we could accept of.

At Mrs. More's we met a serious, well-bred, well-informed gentleman, an intimate friend of Mrs. More's and Mr. Wilberforce's—Mr. Pratt; with whom we dine to-morrow. So you see what a life I lead at Bath! You're not to suppose, when I use the word "serious," that I mean disconsolate or gloomy. On the contrary, I have met with no people further from every thing of the kind. I only mean that they are not fools, or mad: in short, that, in Dr. Young's language, they combine

" True taste of life, with constant thought of death."

I assure you they are people you would like much to live with; and, on the whole, I have been as well off here as I could be, except that Mr. Wilberforce was absent; as my desire to be acquainted with him is much increased by every thing I hear of his private manners: nothing can be more amiable or more interesting.

But do I enjoy all this? I wish I did. I am a little better to-day; but I was uneasy and uncomfortable on Saturday, so as to have little pleasure from the most valued dinner I ever was invited to. In short, I doubt much if I am ever to be well in this world: but what signifies that, if I shall be well in the next! Whatever serves to keep that in our view, is infinitely valuable; and I fear I am of that cast that nothing but continued affliction, of one kind or other, will keep me right. Though, perhaps, I ought not to say that: God's grace is all-sufficient.

Most truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Bristol Hotwells, March 21, 1800. Afternoon.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

* * * * I have little to say. I am not ill in point of health; but, but, but——In short, I am an exquisite self-tormentor. Nothing, I think, agrees with me but quietness.

The evenings are now so long as to admit of walking after dinner. This day, after I rose from table, I walked to the top of a hill, which is rather more than half a mile from the house where I lodge, and had a delightful view of the setting sun. The atmosphere was just in that state, which, without obscuring his form, or even his brightness, admitted of looking directly at his disk; and never did I see it to more advantage. It appeared many times as large as when high up in the heavens; indeed, so large as to need reason and recollection to correct the misinformation of the sense of seeing, otherwise it could not have been supposed the sun at all. And there was all that attendant splendour which Milton speaks of, when he describes the sun as

“ Arraying with reflected purple and gold,
The clouds, that on his western state attend.”

The place, too, was advantageous. The hill I speak of overlooks the Bristol River; which, though itself of no great magnitude, has, on each side of its winding stream, as grand a range of cliffs as any river in England. The scenery is, therefore, in itself, striking and awful; and, when illuminated by the sublime object I have been mentioning, it presented a view, which, to a mind in right tune, would have inspired not merely pleasure, but lively, tranquil, grateful devotion. Even I felt an emotion of regretful piety, sufficient to tell me what my enjoyment in such a situation might have been, if I had been able to retain and improve those religious sentiments which have

been often excited in me by God's providence and grace ; but which I, in almost every instance, have unfortunately suffered to decline—at least, to lose that steadiness and efficacy which are essential to their producing internal happiness.

* * * * *

Farewell.

I am your, and your mother's,
Affectionate and faithful friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Bristol Hotwells, April 10, 1800.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

* * * * * When the thought of going to Dublin occurs to me, associated only with the ideas of some select friends in the morning, and your tea-table, or that of two or three other kind friends in the evening, I see nothing in it which I do not think I could undertake ; and I speak accordingly ; at the time, too, most probably, under the influence of better spirits. But, when I go into other matters of no less certainty—the necessity of my going to the castle (that is, necessity founded on propriety, for they don't require me there) ; the still more painful necessity of receiving visits, hearing details, and talking on subjects which I neither like nor love ; the appli-

cation of persons for my assistance, whom I cannot assist, and who look miserably when I tell them so, with many other appendages, too tedious to mention—I say, when all these present themselves, though I have strong desires, and still stronger motives, I revolt, I turn away my eye from the alarming prospect, and I am ready to say, It is impossible. Still, however, I do not so decidedly yield to these thoughts as to resolve on shaping my conduct by them. I cannot avoid going if I am able; but, I tell you honestly, I doubt if I shall stay long. There are people in Dublin whom, I may say, I prize above all mankind; a few excepted. But, still this country has attractions peculiar to itself; and the friends I meet with here, are, I assure you, of no common kind. And yet, should it please God to give me health and spirits, I never should live wholly here. Once a year, at least, I should visit my friends in Ireland; and stay a longer or a shorter time, as I should find it suitable. This is something of my prospect for the future; and it simply amounts to this—that I should, with very laudable selfishness, wish to skim the cream of both countries.

Yours most truly,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

DIARY CONTINUED.

(From page 61.)

January 16.

I HAD a general hope that all would be well. I hoped, and believed, that God had afflicted me to save my soul; and I felt that I desired nothing more. I, on this account, loved my affliction. The feelings of weakness, which seemed to nourish humility and estrangedness from the world, were dear to me; and any thing like a feeling of health was alarming, for fear it should lead me again to seek happiness in the world. At these times I felt a sweet softness of spirit, which made me both serious and cheerful, and disposed me to be humble and gentle to all men; but these frames were never of long continuance. I used to pray earnestly to God not to take off the rod until it had done its work; and a power of mind to ask this in sincerity was delightful to me.

Such was occasionally my state, until about eight weeks ago, since which time I have experienced a sad and growing decline.

I began insensibly to feel worldly tempers making their appearance, and had too much reason to apprehend a decrease in my religious fervency. I did not, indeed, give way to sin. I cautiously took a part in common conversation. But still I saw too much worldly comfort about me, for my unfortunately versatile and inflammable imagination, not to be influenced by it.

This is, in fact, my great unhappiness. I do

not mean that it has betrayed me into actual sin, inward or outward. This I think it has not yet done. But, at times, I could not keep my mind pure when worldly thoughts arose. I felt too much complacency,—more, I am sure, than was consistent with a regenerate state (though here, perhaps, I judge too hardly of myself)—in thinking of my character and estimation in the world, my connexion with great men, &c.; but I certainly did not yield to these. I blamed myself; and, by reflections on the value of religion, and the nothingness of every thing earthly, endeavoured (and, in those times, without much trouble) to bring back my mind.

But the thoughts I could least repel, and which, I think, have done me infinite mischief, were apprehensions of future danger. While I was very unwell, my sense of weakness kept off even the idea of worldly temptation. It seemed as if God had placed a providential hedge about me. And this (for which I think I felt sincere thankfulness) strengthened my hope of persevering to the end. Many and many a time have I, in the fulness of my heart, cried out repeatedly, O God! I thank thee, with all my soul I thank thee, for my afflictions.

But, unfortunately for me, something like feelings of comparative health grew in me. My sensible weakness was less; my capacity of enjoying the world seemed to be more than I had reckoned on. And, with these altered sensations, I was alarmed to perceive an apparent diminution of humility, and, at least, of the relish for devotion.

If I know my own heart, nothing could have happened to me so truly afflicting. My understanding and my will had seemed fairly turned from the world. I hoped that God himself was working out my salvation; and to feel myself thus, on the edge of a precipice, excited a degree of terror not easy to be expressed. The thought of religion declining in my soul, and the apprehension that my heart was still as fit as ever to betray me, made me so despondent as almost to ensure the very evils which I dreaded.

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER TO THE
REV. RICHARD BOURNE.

Hotwells, July 15th, 1800.

To describe to you my present melancholy situation, would answer no end but to afflict you. Besides, I see it in a light myself which nobody would believe.

Religion, my dear Mr. Bourne, is another kind of thing from what the world imagine. I wished to be religious. In this, I was no hypocrite in the gross sense. But there is a refined kind of hypocrisy, by which we too often impose upon ourselves, and persuade ourselves that our heart is clean, when, in fact, it is all pollution.

My case (for I feel I must say something of it) has been this. From early years I had a strong sense of religious truth, which I never uniformly

yielded to. Whenever affliction came upon me, I was glad to have recourse to it ; but, when health and ease returned, my shortlived devotion went out, like a lamp for want of oil. This doubleness of mind actually laid the foundation of my bad health. The often-repeated conflict affected the tone of my mind ; and what would have been piety in a decided resolute Christian, became, in my versatile and unfixable mind, a kind of mental disease. In fact, I could not be easy without religious movements in my affections ; and I had not determination of mind to lay a steady foundation for such affections, in the principles of my heart and the tenour of my conduct.

I wished, in a real sense, to serve God and Mammon ; I wished to enjoy devotion in the closet, and yet participate in certain enjoyments of the world. Stronger minds, who have been faithful to God's early calls, or to his first striking calls, whether in youth or later in life, are generally able to accomplish this. God enables them, because they use the world in subordination to duty. I never could reach this subordination ; and, therefore, every mixture with the world, however innocent in itself, became, in me, a source of conflict, and, too generally, of contamination. This I really attribute to my want of an internal cordial principle of religion in my heart. Had I had this, I should have found, like other professors of religion, that " to the pure, all things " (that is, all things innocent) " are pure." Alas ! I found the reverse.

The world has been to me what the candle is to the moth. I went not into quiet retirement, to

seek God and do my duty. I persuaded myself that relaxation was necessary for my health and spirits. I went to watering-places, where I found snare after snare. To a real Christian, in whom religious principle was fixed, they would have been no snare; to me they were destruction. I grew, by degrees, better in health; and, as I grew better, I became more disposed to join in common conversation. At this time a gentleman asked me to his house on a visit. My conscience told me this was not for me. I had not resolution to resist. I went. There, in that house, I first observed a visible decline of that very spirit of seriousness which, hitherto, had been my grand defence. It had been, indeed, like a fence between me and temptation. But a change, apparently for the better, took place in my health; and, with that change, I felt the other change in my disposition. From that time, my heart has been gravitating more and more toward earth, and losing more and more the serious sense of religion. I laboured to resist; but I had put myself in the way of temptation, and forfeited the aid of God's Holy Spirit. By so innocent a thing? you will say. My friend, remember that it was no gross vice produced the rejection of the marriage feast, in the Gospel; but merely a preference of a farm, oxen, a wife, &c. But, be it as it may, the fact is, that my taste for devotion, and for religious duty, has, ever since that time, been declining in my mind; and now, I am sorry to say, that amid depressions which no language can express, I not only want those supports which a degree of devotion gave me

formerly, in the worst times; but I have, also, the consciousness of unsubdued corruptions; and of all this, as arising from my gross continued unfaithfulness to God's calls, both internal and external. My mind is, therefore, unhappy, beyond what * * *

TO THE REV. T. STEDMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

London, 10 Buckingham Street, Strand,
August 7th, 1800.

I ENCLOSE you a five-pound note for the use of poor ——. I received from him a piteous letter, which I know not how to answer; it is written in so broken a strain. Tell him, from me, that though I feel for him, as he cannot doubt, I think him extremely wrong. He has still health, except so far as it is weakened by regretful reflection. He has a capital trade; why then should he despond? I think, were I in his case, I should not despond; I mean, if I had only these external matters to struggle with. But he really sinks without reason. He need not feel any pain at being under obligation to me; but I certainly wish him to make a prudent use of my endeavours to aid him, and a determined effort to assist himself.

I wish I could tell you I was better; but I fear my disorder gains strength daily. I need not go into particulars; it would answer no purpose. Farewell; may you be happy.

Believe me your affectionate and obliged

ALEX. KNOX.

DIARY CONTINUED.

(From page 74.)

August 20.

O GOD! whose way is in the whirlwind, yet awaken me. Pardon my sin; pardon my deceitfulness of heart; and sanctify to me even these strange uneasinesses. Oh, awaken me! Work seriousness in me. Convince me, O my God! by the blessed power of thy Spirit, that there is "one pearl of great price;" and make me more than willing to part with all, that I may obtain it. Oh! work upon my understanding; and work upon my heart! I am infinitely unworthy. Oh, for the alone sake of the Redeemer, breathe into me a spirit of prayer; and draw my heart by a sweet and powerful attraction to thyself!

September 4.

God of love, look in mercy upon me! Thou seest my strange situation. Oh! thou seest that desire toward thee dies in the moment almost of its rising; and that, on the whole, my concern for religion is reduced to a dull uneasiness, which seems to answer no other end than merely to give pain. Oh! help me, in this my extremity; open my eyes; breathe into me holy desires of a right kind; and deeply convince me of the evil of sin, and of the exquisite vanity of the world. Endue me, in tender mercy, with these blessed instances of the wisdom from above; and work a spiritual

temper in the very ground of my heart. I repeat it, O God! breathe into me holy desires and spiritual relishes: awaken me to a due concern for my never-dying soul. O God! open my eyes, that I sleep not in death.

TO THE REV. T. STEDMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

10 Buckingham Street, Strand,
Oct. 23, 1800.

I RECEIVED your very kind letter; and I trust you will believe me when I assure you that my silence did not proceed either from forgetfulness or ingratitude. The truth is, I had nothing pleasant to say.

Your letter, I am pretty sure, reached me; but at a time when I found it difficult to write. I have no objection to your making any use you will of what I sent you. I would fain send you something about Hannah More also. I owe much to Mrs. More's kindness; and, therefore, would fain make the attempt. I shall, I think, endeavour to do something: for there is even more reason to defend the living than the dead. And to take notice of Daubeny's attack of the one, and not of the other, would be like an intended omission, and as if a sanctioning of the calumny. I think, therefore, on the whole, that if any thing is said of Baxter, something must be said of Mrs. More.

Yours most truly,

ALEX. KNOX.

TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Oct. 28, 1800.

STRANGE to tell, I can compose almost as well as ever I did. I have been engaged in that work the greater part of this morning; and hardly ever found greater ease in accomplishing it. You may wish to know what I have been composing this morning: I will tell you. A strange kind of a clergyman at Bath, a Mr. Daubeny, attacked Mrs. More most unjustly, for something which he (I almost think wilfully) misconceived, in her book. Now, a gentleman, a friend of mine, is publishing some letters, which were written to him by a deceased divine, Sir James Stonehouse, and in which respectful mention is made of this Mr. Daubeny. My friend does not wish to let this commendation of the attacker of Hannah More go abroad without saying something in a note or appendix, to testify against that attack. This he applied to me long since to do; but I could not bring myself to do it. He has written again; and I have been at it this morning.

My love to your mother.

Truly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Nov. 19, 1800,
10 Buckingham Street.

I RECEIVED your kind, very kind letter this morning: and, let me tell you, I had nearly resolved on the day for setting off for Ireland; though with much fear and trembling: but a painful cause makes it necessary to change my purpose, and proceed the day after to-morrow to Bristol. My poor Michael* caught a severe cold about six weeks ago, which has seriously settled on his lungs, and makes me uneasy even for his life. He has been blistered, but with slight effect. It is precisely in cases like this—I mean in the early stages of blood-spitting—that Bristol waters are deemed efficacious. Thither, therefore, I must take him: and, if he does not grow better, I shall, I really believe, take him to Lisbon. Every thing that one brother should do for another, I ought to do for him. I do not wish these matters to be known to Michael's aunt, as they might reach his mother, and make her unnecessarily unhappy; but great are my fears for him.

I wish I could give you a good account of myself. I look for much from time and patience; and, perhaps, may even yet be good.

I am sure, from what I have stated, you will not accuse me of versatility. My circumstances

* Michael M'Feely, Mr. Knox's faithful and attached servant, who continued with him till his kind master's death.

really do not leave me room for any exercise of choice, the path of duty lying straight before me. My own interest concurs with every call of conscience and gratitude to leave nothing undone, and to postpone nothing that ought to be done in such a case. Farewell.

Most truly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

Bath, December 8, 1800.

* * * I feel your goodness in wishing me to be at your house most gratefully. Whether circumstances may permit me or not to avail myself of such kind proposals as that of yours, relative to my spending the last winter with you, there is something in my case which makes me feel a peculiar value in them. They cheer me more than I can express. Sometime or other I shall explain to you why and wherefore these instances of kindness have so strong an effect on me.

Most truly and gratefully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Dublin, March 4, 1801.

* * * The reception I have met with here, from all my friends, has cheered me in spite of myself. There was no resisting the impression which their cordial expressions of regard were fitted to make on the mind of their object. But, let me assure you, that no friends I ever shall have, no kindnesses I can ever receive, will or can prevent my heart from darting forth toward your most hospitable roof the warmest sentiments of gratitude, and the sincerest wishes for your own true happiness, and that of every member of your family.

What to say of myself I scarcely know. If I am recoverable, I often think I shall recover;—but the main matter is my moral waywardness. I really cannot conceive any thing so dreadful, except depravity itself, as a mind disturbed on that very subject on which it is of such infinite importance that the apprehension should be most clear, and the pursuit most steady; where the greatest felicity may be enjoyed by a rational and sincere view, and where the greatest pain must be felt from an irrational view, even though it should be sincere.

I have been walking, and visiting friends, this forenoon; and I cannot say I am, as yet, the worse for it. The day is fine, the air soft, and the sky clear: and this city is, in some instances, so

improved,—chiefly, indeed, by the opening of a new, or rather the elongation of an old street,—that it is now much more beautiful than ever. Besides, the whole of my walk was performed in company with my worthy young friend, Mr. Jebb; and, toward the close, he was joined by another young clergyman, who, when I was in Ireland before, was a lawyer, but quitted that profession from pure love to a clerical. With these two I had very pleasant conversation on the most important of all subjects. And, while I admired their dispositions, I could not help feeling what use I might be of, if I felt in my heart what I apprehend in my understanding.

Yours, most sincerely and gratefully, while

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

January 13. [supposed 1801.]

* * * And now, a word about Mr. ——. I wished to say something to him which would be satisfactory; but the question was, what should I say? If there be one thing on which I am peculiarly ignorant and dark, it is about the Apocalypse. And, honestly, I must say, I know not how to get into Mr. —'s plan. All, therefore, I could do, would be to hazard an opinion; which could only be this,—that the design appeared well fitted as subsidiary to a comment, but not as a substitute

for one. Nothing is more plain, than that the figures of the Apocalypse are, in general, those of the Old Testament prophets : and they are brought together with amazing ingenuity (if we may apply such a term). But, though I find prototypes in Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, I am not, therefore, necessarily informed what is meant in either place. Sometimes real light is thrown ; but not often. And, indeed, where, or how, is satisfactory light to be had respecting that mysterious book ? If it be thus, in regard to what is already fulfilled, how can we hope to make any thing of what has not yet come to pass ? I own, therefore, I do not think it the most beneficial part of biblical study ; nor, in my humble opinion, is any new light likely to be thrown on it.

There are, also, so many useful pursuits, that it is a pity to puzzle oneself with merely curious ones ; not but that curiosity may be united with utility, even in biblical studies ; but the attempt, for the most part, fails.

I wish some learned person (for much learning, both classical, oriental, and septentrional, it would require,) would write critical annotations on Sir William Jones's "Anniversary Discourses." These would be a fine field for curious and useful research. The design, as already laid down, is grand. So magnificent an outline never was before, I think, given by uninspired man. But it is only an outline ; and an outline, made as if on the wing : so that—whether it can be substantiated—whether the poet's eye did not see more than can be made good to plain minds, is, perhaps, still a doubt ; but,

if it could be made good, great would be the consequence to sacred historic truth. As it is, it shews the man to have been almost above the narrowness of this diurnal sphere, even while clothed with the garment of mortality.

How pleasant, that, when found dead, it was clearly in the posture of devotion !

But he could not but be devout ; though, perhaps, poetically volatile too. But I hope God looks with mercy on constitutional faults. Farewell.

Most truly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

My friend, before you leave Bath, see the good Doctor Maclaine (you know you were introduced to him), and present to him my kind and grateful regards for attentions which I shall ever value. When you see the Mrs. Mores, speak strongly of my respect and gratitude.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. T. STEDMAN.

(Extracts from March 31st to July 8th, 1802.)

MY KIND AND WORTHY FRIEND, Dublin, Dawson Street,
March 31st, 1801.

* * * I am still adrift as to comfort and self-government ; and whether I am capable of true virtue, is to me a mystery which I am not able to unravel.

I have here very pleasant and valuable friends : some, whose goodness I can more admire than I can imitate. I have had invitations already to go to the south and the north of Ireland ; but I prefer much staying where I am. I hope yet to shew you this city, and to have your company in this house ; where, if external circumstances and affectionate attentions could make me happy, I could not fail to be so. My wants are all internal ; I want “the wisdom from above ;” had I that, I should be the happiest man in the world.

May 11th, 1801.

One day I am better ; the next, worse ; and generally so on, alternately. When I am better, I have hope : when I grow worse, I sink into despair. Nothing can be surer than that my corruptions are strong in me ; and that, sometimes, I feel as if I had no contrary principle. But still, these evil movements seem so connected with disease, and certain moments occur in which I have such different wishes, that I am still in doubt about my own character, and unable to ascertain whether I have or have not a spark of virtue. Sometimes I am ready to believe that God, in his wisdom, may be permitting all this as a necessary process to bring me to a full knowledge of myself. And that, though little or nothing appears above ground, there is an operation still going on, like that of vegetable nature in winter ; but then, a single thought rises, and drives all off like a whirlwind.

On the whole, I am unhappy ; but when I can enjoy any thing, I have much to enjoy here. I

have, certainly, a set of the best and pleasantest friends in the world; men, whose regard to me does not depend on political situation, but arises from their own good hearts. And some of them are entitled to stand in the first ranks of human nature. * * * *

June 30th, 1802.

Your kind letter found me in such a bustle about some matters I have been engaged in, on account of a particular friend, that I was not even capable of reading it.

At present I am not going to say much to you, as I am just wishing to be on horseback. But I ever think of you; and can then only cease to think of you with love and gratitude, when I shall have lost all right feelings. At present, I am sometimes very low; but, at other times, I feel a return of tranquillity; in which I have more self-possession, I hope, than at any time formerly. One thing I learn, that religion is all in all for this life, as well as for that which is to come. And I am only solicitous that this truth should rule in my heart, and regulate my whole conduct. But, alas! what particular aberrations from this general wish! Yet I hope I do not depart wickedly from God.

July 8th, 1802.

My plan is necessarily put off. However abstractedly pleasant the scheme of such an excursion would be to me, my present state of spirits

makes me rather pleased with the disappointment. I am too joyless within, to be gratified by any circumstances without. My disease is still heavy upon me : it is disease, I know ; but it is able to produce much which is not disease,—actual moral decay. And, truly, though I find [and lament the growing evil, I can devise no remedy.

I have got Hannah More's eight volumes. Her tracts for the lower classes are much improved. I really find, in " The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain," the substance of a conversation which took place one evening I was with her (whether you were there I do not recollect), on the connexion between the former and the latter part of the nineteenth Psalm. Other valuable additions are made to it, which extend from the 46th to the 52d page of the 5th volume. * * * * *

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. SCHOALES, April 9, 1801, Dawson Street.

* * * It is not from want of respect that I have not acknowledged and attended to the remarks of your respectable friend on my pamphlet : I began to give a little explanation of my meaning, to be handed by you to him, with my thanks ; but I could not accomplish it. I have other subjects, even more pressing,—indeed, far more pressing,—urgent on me, which I cannot muster

spirits to attend to. Let me, then, briefly observe that * * * *

As to the latter observation, on my stating faith to be "a kind of spiritual sense," I beg leave to observe, that the qualifying term of "a kind of" implies clearly that I mean to use a metaphor in aid of the poverty of human language; and that metaphor I must still think justified, not only by the strong terms of *Ἰπόστασις* and *Ἐλεγχος*, in the first verse of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but even by the very words which your friend thinks I am not authorised to rely on,—I mean, those concerning Moses, "He endured, as seeing him that is invisible." For, though miraculous effects of faith are occasionally mentioned in that chapter, yet it is not miraculous faith which is intended to be dwelt upon: it is the moral grace, not the miraculous gift; and the substance of the discourse is clearly meant to apply to all true Christians in all ages. If this be not admitted, whence shall we learn Christianity? for miracle mixes with Christianity throughout the whole New Testament; and, of course, it might, on similar grounds, be objected to any New Testament example (which, by the way, is one of the principal modes of conveying instruction), that the person was inspired. Yet the Apostle says of times of earlier inspiration, "All these things were written for our instruction, that they might be examples unto us," &c. In a word, where can we find adequate definitions or descriptions of any Christian grace, except in the New Testament? And yet, to every such defi-

nition, an objection of the kind we are speaking of, might be made with more or less reason.

But I did not depend on Scripture alone, sufficient ground as it is. My definition is almost in the same words with that of the judicious Henry Scougal, in "The Life of God in the Soul of Man;" and also in the words, or tantamount, of the learned Mr. John Smith, of Cambridge, a most revered divine. I could fence myself with such authorities, almost without end. And where are we to learn sound theological expressions, except from such writers?

As to the possible abuse of enthusiasts, what may not enthusiasts abuse? But, I conceive, we strengthen them much more in that abuse, by dropping sound and authorised expressions because they use them, than by still retaining them in their just and rational sense: for, by assigning over those expressions to them, we enable them to quote the best divines of our Church against us; whereas, by still using them as those wise and excellent men used them, we keep them in our legal possession against illegal intrusion; and we preserve that truth which is at an equal distance from coldness as from fanaticism, and, of course, the only safe and sure antidote against error of whatever kind.

Yours truly,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

Saturday, 15 Dec. (1801.)

* * * I feel pleasure in having seen Dr. Maclaine before he died. When I was introduced (I suppose it was about a month before his death), he did not know me. He complained much of want of memory, and said, "I do not even remember your name; I know I have seen you, but that is all." "Sir," said I, "my name is Knox." "Knox," said he; "do you know any thing of Alexander Knox?" "Sir," I replied, "I am himself." He seemed suddenly illumined: "Give me your hand," said he, with eager affection. "Why, man, you are the very one I have been longing to see. I love you in my heart; and never took any one I ever knew more to my heart. Ah! do not you remember the pamphlet? But, no wonder I did not know you, you are so altered: why, man, you look ten years younger than you did." After this, we got into conversation about matters of church history, and Methodism, and John Wesley's journey to Holland, and what passed between him and Dr. M. at the Hague; and how he got a Col. M'Alister to introduce Mr. Wesley to meetings for piety. In short, he was wonderfully and pleasantly himself, while I staid with him. When I returned to Bath, a few weeks after, his last illness was actually

upon him; and, I suppose, he died within a day or two: I then did not attempt to see him.

* * * I must say no more, having my head preoccupied; but I could not delay to give some kind of reply to your letter, as I hope the businesses of my head will never jar with those of my heart. * * * *

But you mention politics, about which I must say a word; though from as little store of thought as upon any subject that could well occur. The fact is, I have done with thinking about them; Buonaparte, and his friend the pope, outgoing all my reckonings. My serious view is, that the state of the times distances all human calculation, and defies all human power; and that God's awful and mysterious providence is, more than usually, interfering in human affairs, so as utterly to shut out results from human foresight: what will be, therefore, I cannot conjecture. There is much good in England, such, I hope, as God will have a care of; but there is much evil too, and many things to be viewed with dismay in the higher ranks. Much, too, to alarm one in ecclesiastical matters: people seem unusually concerned about religion; but in how many instances are they scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd; the serious, too generally, disfiguring religion by their beclouded views of it; and the *formally* orthodox taking occasion from that, openly and violently, to oppose it. In fact, I do think there has been seldom a time when wise and pious clergymen in the establishment could do more to save souls and serve their country than now; but true labourers appear to me

to be few indeed. The sincere being inadequate, through misapprehension, or ignorance, of Scripture; and the others, through carelessness and secularity.

Always yours, most truly,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

May, 1802.

THOUGH my spirits are at present in a peculiarly bad state, I cannot but write a few lines. Poor Mrs. Browne!* I do not wonder, indeed, that such intelligence should confound you,—unprepared as you were for any thing of the kind. I cannot help wishing to know whether it was sudden; whether she has been indisposed chronically; whether she was, herself, aware of her approaching end; in short, all the circumstances that have come to your knowledge.

I soberly think I knew not such another female character. So much dignity and so much simplicity: so much knowledge, and so entire a sinking of it: so great an attention to what she deemed the proprieties of life, with so thorough and obvious a superiority to all its follies and vanities: such real gravity, and yet such easy cheerfulness:

* The first wife of Isaac Hawkins Browne, Esq. of Badger Hall, Shropshire, many years member of parliament for Bridgnorth.

such kind condescension to the weaknesses of others, with so little appearance of having weaknesses of her own : so free from all stiffness, and yet so evidently under a strict self-government : so established a regard to religion, on her own steady, sober, rational plan : and so clearly exhibiting its efficacy, “ shewing,” as St. James says, “ out of a good conversation, her works with meekness and wisdom ;” and yet so far from censuring or depreciating those who adopted other modes, or saw things in somewhat a different light : in short, she formed a picture in my recollection to which I could not adjoin a fellow. And, when I wished to speak of a finished character in her rank and circumstances, I always spoke of Mrs. Browne.

Mr. B.’s loss is far above all common standards of estimate. She was an exquisite wife for such a husband. But, to her, such an event could scarcely come amiss. “ What will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good ?” And that she was so (supereminently among her equals in rank), was shewn by every portion, and almost every particle, of her conduct.

I would write to Mr. Browne, if I could. But I am, just now, so wonderfully down myself, that it would be dismal affectation in me to speak words of comfort. But who can comfort in such a case ? Such happiness as Mr. Browne must have had in his excellent wife, and so long enjoyed, must have, as it were, struck numberless fibrous roots into the depths of his mind ; all which will now imply equally deep and equally innumerable lacerations. Here, therefore, in a peculiar manner, “ the heart

only knoweth its own bitterness." And the best meant attempts would be little better than random awkwardness. Christianity alone can furnish "a present help." And there seems, in these cases particularly, to be given to time a healing influence; the wound of the heart closing by degrees, like a wound of the body, so as to remove all soreness, though there is still a scar.

The best consolatory argument, in all such cases, is, that "not a hair of our heads falleth without the knowledge of Him whose kingdom ruleth over all from the beginning." Therefore, "whatever is," providentially, "is right." And, could I now give a direction to Mr. Browne's thoughts, I would lead him to meditate on the unerring wisdom of Providence. There is a passage in Isaiah, in which pains are wonderfully taken to illustrate the discriminative delicacy with which God's purposes are carried on in the world; but, I imagine, it oftener escapes than attracts observation. It never struck me, until I met it in Lowth's *Prælectiones*; and then I thought it extremely beautiful. It argues from the various modes of agriculture used among the Jews, and it asks—Does not all this discrimination come from God into the mind of the husbandman? Is God, then, less discriminative or less delicate in his own providential adjustments?

The passage itself, as translated by Lowth, is as follows:—

"Listen ye, and hear my voice;

Attend, and hearken unto my words.

Doth the husbandman plough every day, that he may sow,

Opening and breaking the clods of his field?
When he hath made even the face thereof,
Doth he not, then, scatter the dill, and cast abroad the
cummin,
And sow the wheat in due measure?
And the barley and the rye hath its appointed limit.
For his God rightly instructeth him; he furnisheth him
with knowledge.
The dill is not beaten with the corn dray,
Nor the wheel of the wain made to turn upon the
cummin:
But the dill is beaten out with the staff,
And the cummin with the flail; but the bread-corn with
the threshing wain.
But not for ever will he continue thus to thresh it,
Nor to vex it with the wheel of his wain,
Nor to bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle.
This also proceedeth from Jehovah, God of Hosts.
He sheweth himself wonderful in counsel, great in
operation."

Now, is not this a very noble passage, though borrowed from matters of the lowest kind? Lowest, do I say? That is not the right term: I should have said, commonest; for there is nothing low in agriculture. The agricultural labours of man are those which, of all other occupations, approach nearest the operations of God. And their perfection consists in this nearness of approach; they being then best done, when the indications of nature are most closely followed. These labours, therefore, were peculiarly fitted to the prophet's purpose. And he, certainly, does make an exquisite use of them. "Look (as if he had said) with what nicety of care the husbandman proceedeth. He does nothing out of season,

giving to each work its strictly appointed time : nor does he labour in any instance without discrimination. He has a variety of seeds to sow ; and ——

Unfinished.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

May 25th, 1802.

You might justly express more displeasure than you do at my unusual silence. It did not arise from neglect, but from more than common incapacity. I have begun many, at least several, letters to you, without being able to finish them. I wished particularly to express my deep regret at Mr. Browne's heavy affliction ; but, though I often attempted it, I could not effect my purpose. I scarcely know how to account fully for my dislike to writing,—an exercise which, even three months ago, was rather an amusement than a labour to me. But I am unaccountable to myself in more instances than one.

May 26th.

I endeavour, however, to keep myself up as well as I can. Yesterday evening I took a ride, and this morning again I was on horseback at little more than a quarter after seven. Exercise of this kind is certainly of some service to me ;

though the pleasant effects are but temporary, as to feeling.

I am glad poor Mr. Browne is not absolutely despondent. His loss, however, is, I should think, as great a one as could be sustained by a person in his circumstances. The deceased lady certainly appeared to me to be almost every thing that perfect womanhood implies. She was highly bred; and yet simple and unassuming. She was more than commonly educated; and yet wholly unostentatious. She was steady, yet without a shadow of sternness. She was kind and gentle, not merely from nature, but even more so, if possible, from principle. How far she was fervent in her piety, was best known to herself and to God. But that she was deeply sincere and conscientious in it, was demonstrated, not only by her uniform attention to religious duties, and daily study of the Scriptures, but still more by that gracefulness of self-command which appeared through her whole conduct; and which, I am inclined to think, nothing can produce but the influence of religious conscientiousness. In short, since I knew her, the idea of high female worth hardly ever occurred to my mind without bringing along with it the image of Mrs. Browne. I should be glad to know what were her last feelings, if she were sensible of her approaching end. Not that such circumstances are of any very great importance, except for the comfort of the survivors, and the honour of goodness: yet, still there is an anxious curiosity, in most thinking minds, concerning the

closing scene of those who have been known and regarded.

* * * Farewell.

Believe me most truly and affectionately yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. ALCOCK.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Liverpool, August 24, 1802.

* * * On Thursday I came hither, having never been here before ; and was well rewarded by the grand display of commercial energies which the place affords. I suppose the world again does not exhibit such a perfection of maritime accommodation ; and the place is thriving accordingly, though with little of showy magnificence. * * *

Methodism abounds in this town. * * * It is strange, and lamentable ; but I verily believe the fact to be, that, except among Methodists and methodistical clergymen, there is not much interesting preaching in England. The clergy, too generally, have absolutely lost the art. Wherein I think it consists, you know from my late communications ; and I cannot but think, that, whenever there is such preaching, it will engage attention, and influence hearts. There is, I conceive, in the great laws of the moral world, a kind of

secret understanding, like the affinities in chemistry, between rightly promulgated religious truth and the deepest feelings of the human mind: and, where the one is duly exhibited, the other will respond. “Did not our hearts burn within us?” said the two travellers to Emmaus; but, to this, devout feeling is indispensable in the speaker. Now, I am obliged to state, from my own observation, that this *onction*, as the French not unfitly term it, is, beyond all comparison, more likely to be found in England, in a Methodist conventicle, than in a parish church. Perhaps, scarcely at all in the latter, except where the minister is methodistical. In fact, if he has *onction*, he will be called methodistical, for that single reason (as I dare say, when I inquire, I shall find to be the case with the excellent Mr. Gisborne). Now, of this, the consequence is, that the religious animal, man, goes, instinctively as it were, where his religious susceptibilities are most powerfully elicited. And, when once religious sentiment is really excited, he will return to that preacher whose discourses have had that effect on him, just as naturally as the sagacious quadruped to his accustomed field. This, and this alone, seems really to be that which fills the Methodist houses, and thins the churches. I am, I verily think, no enthusiast. If I understand any thing either of church history, of divinity, or of myself, I am a most sincere and cordial churchman of the seventeenth century: a humble disciple of the school of Hale and Boyle, of Burnet and Leighton, and, in a word, of all our grand luminaries who followed their own illus-

trious reformers, rather than the Genevan school; (an error imputable to some great names, such as Usher and Hall.) If, therefore, I err, I err with a glorious company; with Hooker, Herbert, Hammond, &c. Now, I must aver, that when I was in this country two years ago, I did not hear a single preacher who taught me like my own great masters, but such as are deemed methodistical. And I now despair of getting an atom of heart-instruction from any other quarter. The Wesleyan Methodist preachers (however I may not always approve of all their expressions) do, most assuredly, diffuse this "true religion and undefiled:" and, therefore, I felt real pleasure, last Sunday evening, in being one of a large congregation, where, I can bear witness, the preacher did, at once, speak the words of truth and soberness. There was no eloquence: the honest man never dreamed of such a thing. But there was far better; a cordial communication of vitalised truth. I say vitalised, because what he declared to others it was impossible not to feel he lived on himself.

It is, indeed, much to be regretted that such should be the only conduits of the water of life through this land. And yet I must adhere, on the coolest consideration, to what I have stated. The dry details of meagre morality which are pronounced from most parochial pulpits, have no more aptitude to mend hearts, than the most fraudulent quack medicines have to avert mortality: but, beyond doubt, what is spoken in conventicles, has; for the fruits are apparent in the sobriety, the regularity, the conscientious conduct, personal

and relative, of thousands and tens of thousands. Now, in my mind, this influential piety is of inestimable worth. It comes from the only true source—revealed truth, “received in the love of it:” and its results are answerable; being exactly what St. James so beautifully describes it, “the wisdom from above;” “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy, and of good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” It certainly does not operate mechanically, and therefore not necessarily. It is, of course, liable to be both checked and warped by the free agency of the subject; therefore, fair beginnings often produce no lasting fruit; and undue mixtures lessen the effect too frequently, even where they do not wholly overcome the good principle: all which is foretold in Scripture. Amid all this, however, the candid observer will discover so much real good, so much practical faith in God, so much conscientiousness, not only respecting actions and words, but wrong tempers and wrong thoughts, so much real disinterested charity, and so much self-possession, and habitual contentment, and gratitude to God, that, for my own part, though still and ever sincerely desirous to correct, if I could, the aberrations of Methodism, I dare no more oppose or depreciate its substance, than I dare slight or condemn the Bible. “What,” I ask myself, “would this country be, if methodistic piety were now extinguished throughout its middle and working classes: if that sense of God, that feeling of inward piety, which raises the soul of humble poverty to a happiness of which mere moral philo-

sophy cannot even catch the idea, were to be swept off and annihilated?" Alas! what a precious treasure of heartfelt comfort, of fireside contentment, of steady, decent industry, of social virtue, of public order and safety, would go along with it! Yet this piety, in my mind, can only be excited by Baxterian earnestness; (for Baxter, though not properly of our Church, I fully join with you in classing with our best divines). And this, in our day, is called Methodism.

So much, then, for the thoughts which the first view of things in this country has inspired. In Ireland, I reflect with pleasure, things are better. All good, there, is not confined to Methodists, nor the methodistical. We have, there, many who, though not at all methodistical, have religion sincerely at heart, and have hearts finely formed for liberality: with these persons I converse with much pleasure, though I am much more methodistical than they (indeed, in substance and in wish, what is generally deemed a Methodist). This they well know; and yet they, kindly and liberally, love to talk and live with me: and very much indeed their pleasant intercourse contributes to my comfort. I sometimes could hope, too, if I were myself practically established in my own principles, I might be of some service to them. I am sure, if I were what I should be, a day would scarcely pass, in which I would not beg of God to mature and make fruitful the virtuous vegetation with which their bosoms are already teeming.

Perhaps you'll say, why do I place myself among those who are deemed Methodists? I'll

tell you why. Because I conceive the present definition of methodism, in its most generic sense, to be, that spiritual view of religion which implies an habitual devotedness to God, both of the heart and conduct, so as to indispose for all fashionable pleasures and gaieties,—to lead to habitual self-denial,—and to aim, not only at rectitude and peace, but at “joy in the Holy Ghost,” from a consciousness of what St. Paul calls the *Πνεῦμα Υἱοθεσίας*. This view is, I think, called methodism by modern high-churchmen. It has brought the appellation of methodism upon Hannah More; and I am perfectly satisfied it should do so upon the much humbler individual, myself. I never, therefore, reject the imputation; though, as I said before, I hold not one principle but what the great and true churchmen, mentioned above, held and maintained.

What a letter! I hope it will not tire you. You'll wish to know something about myself. I can only say, that, though I have still many dismal times, I have, also, quieter and happier intervals. I am able to compare my present travelling feelings with my former ones; and the advantage is, undeniably, on the side of the present. I have just come over here for change of scene and continued exercise. And now, the prospect of having the company of an old friend, who, though a Methodist preacher, is a most intelligent and ingenious man, to travel a little with me next week, has induced me to protract the intended stay of four days to ten.

Farewell, my good doctor: my love and best

wishes attend your whole family ; being, with heart-felt regard,

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR SIR,

Liverpool, August 26, 1802.

* * * I thought I should have been approaching Shrewsbury this day : but, before I could so fix my plan as to notify it to you, I was induced to change it, as to time : that is, I was led to stay a week longer here, in order to have Adam Clarke's company to Manchester, and, perhaps, onward into Yorkshire. He wishes it ; and his health requires some such thing. For my mere gratification, I think it most likely I should not have staid ; but his concern in the plan interested me, and led me to stay here,—unnecessarily on other accounts,—and, therefore, with no great sensible pleasure, as I have really nothing to occupy me in the meantime but my own retired enjoyments, and a little, now and then, of his conversation.

All this being premised, I have now to tell you, that, toward next Saturday, I hope to see you at Shrewsbury. Through God's mercy, I may apprise you that I shall, probably, not harrass you so much as formerly : my spirits are, assuredly,

better ; and I have more power to trust in the all-wise and all-gracious God.

Believe me ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. ALCOCK.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Dawson Street, Sept. 30, 1802.

* * * I had no great anxiety about your son ; though I had a real interest in his welfare. I grow, I think, in a belief of Providence, as adjusting the affairs of individuals, more than at any former time. I am certain the good and gracious God has a peculiar regard to youthful conscientiousness, and to paternal prayer. “ I have been young,” says the Psalmist, “ and now am old ; yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.” I do not know but I am, this day, enjoying the consequences of my pious father’s fervent supplications for my salvation.

* * * * *

There are few things I more wonder at than the varieties under which sincere religion appears. But, if it be sincere, it will, some way or other, tranquillise the mind, and sweeten the temper. Nothing, almost, can be more unlike than Mr. —’s religious habits and mine. His, the most removed from,—mine, substantially the same with,—what modern fashionable divines call methodism.

Yet we talk together with good agreement ; and feel as if we were servants of the same Master.

Still, however, though holding the substance of methodism, I believe I differ from most Methodists in some of my views. My notions of what constitutes the reality of religion, and of God's mercy to human beings, are, probably, less confined than those of the generality of that denomination. Yet I meet several of the Wesleyans, who think much as I do ; for instance, one charming Methodist that I rode with this day. I was this morning telling him some of my charitable views ; and he received them with delight. I mean, that, even in Christian countries, there are numbers who, in the divine view, rank as heathens and as Jews ; and will be reckoned with accordingly.

But I must conclude.

Truly yours, my dear Doctor,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dublin, November 19, 1802.

To your truly kind inquiries about my health, I can give but a middling answer. I am often very well for a day or two ; then I sink into depths of such darkness and dryness, that I often ask, with

dismay, "How low am I to descend?" But, in spite of such depression, I would hope I rather gain than lose ground. I, in some respect, see my calling; being convinced that a deeper sense of evangelic religion would "stablish, strengthen, and settle me." But often I so wholly lose the feeling of this, as to seem to myself just on the brink of yielding to any temptation that should offer. I do, however, endeavour to cleave to God, and to look for the grace of the Gospel; but amid wonderful perplexities and embarrassments. For the most part, however, I have some tolerable hope that all will, through Divine mercy, be well.

Most sincerely and always yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. ALCOCK.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

December 4, 1802.

* * * Your distinction between methodism and Methodists is very fair and just. And the same may, too truly, be made between Christianity and Christians. I value nothing in methodism but its Christianity. And thirty years' experience has satisfied me that I may and ought to value it, for its subserviency to that great end. My own heart has shewn me how hard a thing it is to be a thorough practical Christian. I, therefore, do not wonder that, in whatever situation,

this is so painfully rare. But, certainly, I have known a great number of Methodists, who have done real honour to their profession. I am not easily pleased: my demands are high as to character and conduct. I, also, inherit some skill in countenances and manners from my mother. And I am not prejudiced in favour of any one peculiar feature of methodism. Christianity I love to something of enthusiasm. The spirit and worship of the Church of England I admire and venerate, as being, in the highest degree of probability, of divinely providential appointment and conformation. Methodism must recommend itself by its Christianity to any degree of my regard. With these undissembled feelings, then, I have been looking at Methodists for five-and-thirty years; and the result of that observation I have thought it a duty to declare to the world. But I have not declared all my motives; nor can I, ever so briefly, mention them now. I shall, therefore, only add, that my attachment to methodism is identical with my attachment to Christianity, for the reason above assigned: but my attachment to Methodists is only like the judges' patent,—*quamdiu* (and *quatenus*) *se bene gesserint*.

As I have room, and have had nothing particular to add for the present, I will transcribe two testimonies; which, I think, powerfully support my evidence. The first is a most curious one, in my mind; and, as I conceive, pays as solid a tribute to the Methodist character as ever was allotted to it by human suffrage. You will like it the better, because it extends to those whom I

admire no less than you,—the Moravian connexion.

“We may be allowed to presume,” says Paley, “that the institution which the original teachers of Christianity preached to others, they conformed to in their own persons. But the change which this would produce was very considerable: after men became Christians, much of their time was spent in prayer and devotion, in religious meetings, in celebrating the Eucharist, in conferences, in exhortations, in preachings, in an affectionate intercourse with each other, and correspondence with other societies. Perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike that of the *Unitas Fratrum*, or of the modern Methodists. Think, then, what it was to become such at Corinth, at Ephesus, at Antioch, or even at Jerusalem! What a revolution there must have been of opinions and prejudices, to bring the matter to this! We know what the precepts of the Christian religion are; how pure, how benevolent, how disinterested a conduct they enjoin; and that this purity and benevolence are extended to the very thoughts and affections. We are not, perhaps, at liberty to take for granted that the lives of the first preachers of Christianity were as perfect as their lessons; but we are entitled to contend, that the observable part of their behaviour must have agreed, in a great measure, with the duties which they taught.”

I have given you the context much at large; as, on this, the force of the few words depends. And, I own, I think that force is great; because the thought is as strong a one as could well occur.

How outside a view, however, was Paley's! how inside a one, mine! And, yet, I feel the justness of Paley's idea more than he could have done, possibly.

My other testimony is no less strong—*The British Critic*. The character given of the Methodists in this work (1796) is—"A sect, which, however erroneous in a few points, has produced a beneficial operation upon the minds of many individuals; and may safely boast of several within its pale, distinguished by their blameless manners and useful accomplishments."

Is not this a little epitome of my character of them? If I publish a second edition,* I think I'll have this on my title-page.

Believe me ever truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR AND WORTHY FRIEND,

Saturday,
December 19, 1802.

* * * It is not about myself that I now wish to write to you; it is about your son Tom. It were certainly to be desired that his turn had been otherwise. But you are to consider that such a tendency, in numbers of mankind, is absolutely essential to the great providential plan: in fact, it

* Of the Letters to Mr. Walker, of Trinity College, Dublin.

is one of the most efficient springs in the whole machine of human society : without it, what would human nature have been at this day ?

And just look at the wonderful means which Divine wisdom provided for calling forth this propensity, even at the earliest period, into prompt and efficient action. The ark was led to Mount Ararat, where it discharged its burden between two seas, the Euxine and the Caspian. The sons of Noah would naturally spread southward, where they met the Arabian Gulf; and westward, where they speedily would come in view of that inland ocean, so astonishingly adjusted for its purpose—the Mediterranean. This was so placed as to form a grand nexus between the three great portions of the world. And you see, accordingly, its surrounding shores have been the scenes of the greatest and most pregnant events registered in the pages of history.

Cast your eye on a map of the world, and observe these providential *stimuli* to early maritime attempts. Suppose one of those active spirits of remote antiquity standing on the brow of Mount Carmel, and looking (as the servant of Elijah at a later period) towards the sea. Could he help wishing to explore the recesses of that ocean, and to try what new characters of country extended along its banks ? The trial was, evidently, soon made. Adventure followed adventure. The margin of that sea, particularly its northern shores, became the nurseries of all earthly improvement. Civilisation grew from them along the face of the continents, like ivy on a wall : while commerce

covered its surface from Tyre,—that “Mart of Nations”—to the remote Gades. How beautiful is that of Cowper—

“ Again, the band of commerce was designed
 T’ associate all the branches of mankind.
 And, if a copious plenty be the robe,
 Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
 Wise to promote whatever end he means,
 God opens fruitful nature’s various scenes.
 Each climate needs what other climes produce,
 And offers something to the general use :
 No land but listens to the common call ;
 And, in return, receives supply from all.
 This general intercourse, and mutual aid,
 Cheers what were, else, a universal shade ;
 Calls nature from her ivy-mantled den,
 And softens human rock-work into men.”

How vast, then, are the consequences which have followed from this arrangement! and how many are yet to follow! Is not England, at this day, by her maritime ascendancy, carrying new sets and germs of civilisation to the most remote regions? Why, then, should you regret that your son feels a disposition toward so important a sphere of action? They, to be sure, who work individually, seldom advert to these extended views; but the views are not the less founded: nor are they the less, instruments in the great scheme of beneficence.

As to temptations,—my good friend, where are they wanting? But, that they do not so necessarily abound in a sea life as might at first view be thought, is proved by numberless instances. Some virtues thrive peculiarly there. And that all

may, cannot be doubted, on the very ground I have mentioned,—that it is providential. Read the letter in Butler's book from Bishop Hildesley's seafaring brother; and you will find a good proof there, that the maritime profession is not inconsistent with virtue or religion. The Psalmist tells you, that "They which go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters, these men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." And, amongst all the last blessings of Moses, there is not a more beautiful one than that on the two tribes of Zebulon and Issachar, who, from the circumstance of having the great headland of Mount Carmel and its fine harbour (the best on all that shore, now Acre, made once more famous by Sir Sidney Smith's victory over Buonaparte) just on their common boundary, became the great navigators of Israel. Read the passage. If I live, I'll give you some more thoughts on it. But, on the whole, you see that the seafaring life is necessary to the best purposes; suggested both by natural and providential arrangements; and honoured with a special benediction in revealed religion.

I shall now lose the post, if I do more than assure you that I am

Ever your most faithful, and

Unchangeably indebted Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Feb. 26, 1803.

I THANK you for your last kind letter : of my state of health I know not well what to say. My nervous symptoms are altered ; and, in some material respects, abated : so that this has been the quietest winter I have ever passed through. But I have still much to combat with ; and I often am almost overwhelmed. Still, however, I have something of quietness ; and, after a time, better feelings revive. I hope there is good in me ; and I am sure, if there is, it is from God. I, therefore, trust I am in his hands, and that he will fill up what is wanting, and make all things work together for my good. Under this shelter I wish quietly to take refuge and rest, whatever winds of temptation assail me.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

March 5, 1803.

* * * I have not heard from Mr. ——— for a long time, though I was the last writer. I do suspect that he has no great pleasure in my correspondence, though I am confident he would wish to be kind, and cannot easily help being polite and courteous. But, though he may accidentally like my remarks on some subjects of a

general nature, he most probably has rather an unfavourable opinion of my particular way of thinking. He knows it is, substantially, the same with that of Hannah More and Mr. Wilberforce; and he has an antipathy, perhaps incurable, to every species of methodism; within which generic term, he, not without some good reason, classes the sentiments common to those two venerable names and myself. I, therefore, am entirely disposed to receive with unfeigned good-nature, and I hope Christian love, every good-natured, or kind, or courteous expression on the part of Mr. —; but I am ever ready, also, to be without those things, with the same good-will to the person; for it is I who have taken up a revolting system, and I have done it with my eyes open: I know that thorough Christianity can never be completely palatable to any who are not sincerely desirous to be thorough Christians: and, therefore, I aim at no compromise; being satisfied, nay, being ambitious, to be a pilgrim and a stranger upon earth. But all this would be silly rhodomontade, if I were not as good-humoured and complacent with those who don't quite like my system, and who even less cultivate myself on that account, as if they were flattering me. This steady, invariable kindness, is “the soul of all the rest,” as Milton finely says: and, if I find this wanting, I hope I shall be more disposed to fall out with myself for the deficiency, than with any one for the supposed provocation. * *

Believe me always affectionately and faithfully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY KIND AND WORTHY FRIEND,

Aug. 12, 1803.

I ENJOY wonderful health, both of body and mind : so that often I think myself even already richly indemnified for those sufferings, without which, probably, I could not, in the nature of things, have had the kind of tranquillity which I now enjoy. I have said above, often ; for I sometimes fear lest my quiet should not be completely of the Christian kind : but hope, on the whole, outweighs fear.

Yours ever, with sincerest love,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. ALCOCK.

September 1803.

I MUST think that it requires advancement in heart-religion rightly to relish the Holy Scriptures. I think I never relished them till of late, and still but poorly and imperfectly. But it is one of my strong ideas of progressive happiness to be progressively impressed with the glories of the Scripture. I feel it so, that I endeavour daily to crave from God a deeper love of his word, sensible that in that single prayer I am asking the compendium of Christian excellence.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dawson Street, Sept. 5, 1803.

* * * Do not let your spirits droop. When they do, as you describe, go into retirement, and pray solemnly and sincerely to Him “that seeth in secret,” that He would make every thing adverse which you meet on earth, an impellent of your heart to Him—the only sure refuge and comfort. You have felt devotion, and I trust the tendency is not lessened. To acquire such a feeling where it has never yet been elicited, is, perhaps, strictly “impossible with men:” but to stir it up where it has been felt, is very much within human power, under that assistance which is certainly annexed to honest endeavour. Were your chagrins to be the occasion of your “growing in” this parent “grace,” you would, at length, greatly bless God for them: for invaluable is that occurrence, whatever it be, that leads us to more habitual and deeper devotion. Judging, as far as a short-sighted creature can, I should think this is the very purpose of Heaven in your present trials. You seem to me fitted to be the heir of your mother’s piety. But such piety as she had, and as you have had many prelibations of, is not formed in the mind without providential helps and instruments: and as poverty of spirit is its indispensable preparative; seriousness (“blessed are they that mourn”), its inseparable concomitant; and meekness, its first fruit; it seems natural, and

perhaps necessary, that the outward or personal circumstances should be so disposed as to predispose to these tempers; and adverse circumstances are then surely tending to these great purposes, when they impel the mind to take refuge in God.

I believe you will not disrelish this counsel; but you will be apt to think that you are too weak, too frail, and too impressible for such a habit as that which I describe, to be fully formed in you. To this I answer, that the weakness you have to complain of, is what all have until God, in his own way, works a happy alteration: and this he really does work in as hopeless subjects, and much more so, than yourself. With our weaknesses, therefore, we actually have nothing to do, in the way of anxiety. We have only to strive against them when they are felt, and to ask aid from God. If we so hate them in ourselves, as to be cordial in our prayers for deliverance from them, God can soon and easily do that for us. A deepened sense of Himself, and of the great facts of Christianity, with a heart-feeling of their spiritual intention, (the crucifying us to the world, and the spiritualising of our minds); this sentiment, I say, itself growing up within us, will bring with it the very peace and victory we look for. For the more the heart gets a concern and relish for these transcendent objects, the less its happiness is affected by the casualties of earth. "I know," says St. Paul, "both how to be abased, and how to abound." How did he learn this? Evidently thus: he had so set his mind upon, or,

rather, his heart was so attracted and engaged by, spiritual and eternal good, that any abasement or exaltation that earthly things could cause, was to him, comparatively, extrinsic and trivial. While earthly things hold the affections, the feelings will rise and fall with them, and, of course, be liable to daily and hourly agitation and torment. When spiritual things are become the object of our solicitude and love, their immovableness and plenitude give us both fixedness and fulness. So that something is understood of that grand saying, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Certainly, it requires great strength of mind to bear continued mortifications and depressions; but the humble, subdued feeling which a spiritual view of Christianity produces, and the supreme wish which it inspires, to gain a complete conquest over the carnal mind, do really make these painful matters, in some degree, change their nature, and lose their oppressiveness. The mind gets above them, and is only concerned that it may "not be moved to do evil;" a concern which God himself attends to, and crowns with sure success.

Such are the results, I do firmly believe, of having recourse to prayer as a refuge from earthly afflictions. These happy effects are, however, not to be expected at once; but they will grow up, like the vegetation described by our blessed Saviour, "night and day, men know not how." If no pleasure is felt, no warmth perceived, that is no reason why it may not soon be felt; for such feelings spring up imperceptibly; till, at length, they make themselves to be felt by their reality

and strength. And when this does take place, their influence is not confined to the hour: the sweet calm continues, tranquillising the mind, rationalising the whole conduct, and giving a new strength to bear even "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." I wish I felt more myself of what I have been endeavouring to describe: but I do feel enough to convince me of its blessed reality, and what I would not part with for the fee-simple of the solar system. It is truly happy to go forth into the open walks of life, whatever those walks be, carrying with one such a spirituality of mind, as gives cheerfulness without levity, and the pleasant and prudent use of this world without the abuse. And it is yet more happy to have a predominant relish (without which the other could not be) for returning into quiet, to resume those mental, moral, and spiritual exercises and pursuits, which constitute the ultimate happiness of the soul, and which make even this desert earth a pleasant way to the heavenly country. Of this, I do feel more than I once thought I ever should or could feel. So that, even the severest trials which you witnessed, and still severer ones which you did not witness, are already more than compensated in the tranquillity which, for the last eighteen months, but especially during the present year, has been growing up in me. Yet I am not presumptuous; for every hour makes me feel my own great weakness, and God's infinite mercy. I, therefore, humbly attest, in a very poor, low way, the substantial power of Christianity to give "a peace" which I know this world cannot give; and

which I trust it cannot take away. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace."

My friend, I hope I have not tired you. It would rejoice my heart if what I could write might be the means of conveying to you ever so little of that comfort which I greatly feel you need; and which I know you can only have from "the Fountain of living waters." Were you brought to this, sure and confident I am, Providence would take care of your outward circumstances, amend your health (which only needs tranquillity to establish it, I am sure), and carry you, perhaps, to your father's age, in sweet enjoyment of life, and sweeter readiness for a better. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you." "I have been young," says the Psalmist, "and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread."

You're not to suppose, from all I have said, that I have not my depressions and weaknesses too. Alas! I may possibly think, before this day is over, that I have been very impudent in writing such a letter, and that I am in danger of being upset myself by the next temptation; but these fits of depression do not make havoc of me as formerly; and I trust they will not grow worse, but rather still diminish.

Yours ever,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR MISS STEDMAN,

Bellevue, Co. Wicklow,
Sep. 16, 1803.

I WRITE to you, at present, from one of the most charming places in the British Empire. Hawkstone I should soon be tired of; as, notwithstanding the fine view from the column, its striking objects are chiefly within itself. But, here, the place itself is not only finely diversified, but the prospects are sublime. Within the grounds is one of the most picturesque valleys I ever saw; accounted among the great objects of this romantic county: it is formed by a double range of high hills, to which continued foliage gives every possible advantage. On one side, the horizon is formed by the sea between Ireland and England; with a very extended view of the Irish coast, terminated by a noble bay, and a bold headland furnished with a light-house. On the land sides, the prospect of a diversified and picturesque country is bounded by a range of mountains: among which, two are remarkable for the form; being both of a conical shape, and, from thence, called the Two Sugar Loafs. In short, I never saw, altogether, a more finely situated place. And great wealth has enabled its owner, Mr. Peter la Touche, to add to it every kind of decoration which good taste would approve; and some which visitants are surprised by. Among the rest, there is a continued greenhouse — so long, as to form a very tolerable walk — furnished with a multitude of exotics, and spread-

ing out into little shrubberies of lemon and orange trees, palms, and other tropical productions of vegetable nature. Of the curiousness of this structure, you may form some idea when I tell you, that when Mr. Edmund Burke was last in Ireland, and on a visit to this place, as Mrs. La Touche was leading him on through this same glass-walk, he exclaimed " Oh, ma'am, this is absolutely the Arabian Nights' Entertainments!" (meaning a scene like those in that book): " I beg you'll allow me to call my servant to see it."

Such is the place where I have been walking, just before I sat down to write. Of course, you'll allow that, if place could make one happy, I must be happy here. And the fact is, I am very happy; but not because the place is a fine one: a much better reason is, that the owners of this house are lovers of goodness, to a degree rarely to be met with in their station.

* * * * *

This is the second visit I have paid here; and I never met with any in whose acquaintance I have found more real satisfaction.

I have given you this account to shew you that no circumstances in life need prevent real goodness; and that, when once the pleasure of goodness is felt, all other pleasures are undervalued and despised, even by those who have them most in their power.

Believe me

Your affectionate and obliged Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Sept. 22, 1803.

* * * I hope, by this night's post, to send both the matters you wish for. About Erskine, I might be ashamed, were it not that I'm obliged, for peace of mind's sake, to be habitually gentle to my own foibles. The truth is, my friend, I still labour under great mental infirmities, which push me, or betray me, into all manner of negative irregularities; and, sometimes, in lesser matters, into positive ones too. How long it may be only in lesser matters, I should tremble to think, were it not that I trust in the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God:" the result of both which, I hope, will be the necessary participation of the Spirit of God, in his strengthening and purifying influences. Without these, I should soon be a moral bankrupt.

I differ from present fashionable Divines in no point more than in this; that they think the influences of the Spirit of God wholly imperceptible: I, on the contrary, am certain that no true comfort in religion can be enjoyed until those influences are rationally perceived in such efforts as our own power never could have produced.

What is that aid of which so much is said in Scripture, if it be marked with no moral effect but what reason could accomplish for itself? In such a view, with what hyperboles is the New Testament filled! and to what a cold and meagre

skeleton does Christianity shrink! This is not the doctrine of the Church of England. It tells us (17th Article) that godly persons “feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things.” And this, in my mind, is the very soul of our Christian religion; this real and felt influence, this transmutative and regenerative energy, is the very thing which places Christianity above all philosophy, and all mere law, even though given from Heaven; and this it is which makes it, to weak and corrupted man, what St. Paul calls it, “the power of God unto salvation.”

Sure I am it is the neglect of this “inward and spiritual grace” which keeps Christianity so low amongst us, and so limited in the world. They who feel nothing of this, naturally neglect it in their preaching; and, whenever it is neglected, that takes place which Milton describes in “*Lycidas* :”—

“ And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.”

Serious persons go off to conventicles; infidels are confirmed in infidelity; and the thoughtless dream on, till the sleep of life is ended.

Believe me always yours most faithfully,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Nov. 7, 1803.

* * * I own I should look forward to impending events with great uneasiness, if I had not hope in God. Certainly, there is great spirit in England; but the devotedness to money-making, which has, for half a century, particularly, been so rife among the English public, is a bad preparation for critical times. If ever people were at the sole and exclusive disposal of Providence, we are. God send us a good deliverance!

Of my own part of it I do not much think; indeed, scarcely at all. My practical renunciation of "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world" now greatly stands me in stead; and Christianity has so evinced its efficacy in bringing me through personal affliction, that I rest upon it for all future trials. I really wonder, sometimes, at the quiet of my mind, when outward occurrences might seem likely to discompose it, and I fully feel that it is not to any efforts of my own I owe my happiness. Six years ago, in the house of your brother Adam, I underwent a revolution, that emancipated me from the slavery of this world. To that wonderful time, therefore, I trace back every thoroughly good habit. I can look back to a point at which I awoke, as it were, from a dream, and found myself as if hanging over fathomless perdition; and I can mark another point, a few days after, when, in conversation with a Methodist preacher,

a dawn sprung up, that has been since often beclouded by disease, but which never has gone back. In neither instance did my own reflection operate ; but the feeling, in the first instance, was peculiarly, *a parte ante*, insulated : so that, though I am no advocate for the necessity of sudden conversions, yet neither can I, consistently with my own experience, reject them.

I think I grow fonder and fonder of quiet retirement.

“ Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.”

I greatly like living as I do, without the name of a house, as it frees me from temptation to ask to dinner any but those whom Miss Fergusson chooses to admit ; and this contributes to ease, both of mind and of circumstances. I have reason to think some of my friends, now in town, think it very odd that I take no notice of them ; but I could not undergo the coercion of two or three such hours as that would imply, without sensible hurt. I, therefore, leave myself quietly to be misconstrued, rather than quit a track that I find necessary. Now, my friend, why may not you obtain, through the mercy of God, the same love of privacy ? Nay, have you not a good share already ? And, with such a feeling, why should you not become more and more satisfied and comfortable ? You have more family comforts than I : to be sure, the good Miss Fergusson is more to me than my family could have been, even my niece herself. But you have many excellent beings connected with you ; and all, I am sure, kind at heart toward you, and invariably interested for you. I am not

recounting these providential blessings as if you did not fully value them; but I am, for my own pleasure, at this moment, contemplating your wealth even in this world: for what wealth is equivalent to such a connexion? Now, compare this populousness of kindred with my solitude. Not a blood connexion that, as such, cares a straw about me, except my poor old aunt. You “dwell among your own people.” Labour, therefore, my dear friend, to repel all uneasy distrustful thoughts, and always remember that God can make any circumstances comfortable, by inspiring religious strength and pious cheerfulness; and he does do so to those who pray assiduously for his aid. My only affliction in the world is my own heart, which I sometimes fear is contracting, from changes in my bodily frame, a less vivid sensibility about moral feeling than formerly, so that something of pride and irritability seems still to lurk more in my nature than I am apt, in general, to suspect; and, though it but shews itself in the bottom of my mind, it makes me tremble, lest I should forfeit my Paradise. But I hope (and I trust I shall not be disappointed) that God will “renew my strength.” Had I not this hope, strengthened by experience, I should sink in despondency at the face of these inward enemies. There is still as much truth as ever in that assurance—“my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

God bless you, my worthy friend, and

Believe me always most truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. T. STEDMAN.

MY WORTHY FRIEND,

Dec. 30, 1803.

* * * Really, now I am writing to you, I am ashamed to talk to you thus at my ease. It is, to myself, extraordinary that I should have so delayed to write ; but, if you saw into my mind, you would be less disposed to wonder. I often felt the inclination to write ; but the giving you the explanation with which this letter commences, appeared to me so irksome a matter, that it proved to me an absolute “lion in the way ;” and yet, notwithstanding this strange indolence, I have been well, and, I may add, happy. How sincerely desirous should I have been to tell you so, again and again ; but the soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath not. I am not a sluggard, however ; but, in this, I have been akin to one. Forgive me, my friend, and never let me remain thus indolent again. If I should not write to you, write you to me ; and be always assured that I shall be truly glad to hear from you, and of you, of yourself and yours, those who are with you, and those who may be absent.

I write at a critical time.* What may not happen before a few weeks, or even days ! That saying in the Psalms, “He shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, for his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord,” has, at such a season, peculiar force ; and would, I think, be a good subject for a dis-

* The time of riots in Dublin.

course, as being likely, indeed certain, to come home to men's bosoms. I sometimes feel strong and easy, but my mind becomes again weak and beclouded; and, I fear, if near danger were to appear, I should scarcely play the hero. But, on the whole, my strength, I hope, is more than my weakness.

I must here break off.

Ever your grateful and affectionate Friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevûe, Thursday morning.

* * * Every thing is kind, pleasant, and easy: the weather fine; the place delightful; and my mind not unhappy: God be praised! At no former period of my life could I have lived in such circumstances with such composure. I sometimes almost think that I am providentially brought here to shew me that I have more strength of mind than I supposed.

Monday night. 1803.

I had intended returning to-morrow; a week here being then complete; but some motives induce me to prolong my stay. Alas! alas! what sad work has been in Dublin! To this hour we are ignorant of particulars, except some of the remarkable deaths. I suppose you would think it strange that Mrs. La Touche and I went down, this day, nine miles lower than this place, to see Mrs. Tighe, of Rosanna; yet, I conceive, there was no real

danger. Mrs. La Touche proposed the jaunt, in consequence of something I had said some days ago; and, as she had no apprehensions, I thought neither need I. So that, while you, in town, were, probably, full of alarm, we were passing, with all apparent unconcern, through the country: and, certainly, the most beautiful country I ever passed through: it was picture after picture.

In many places in the country I should be uneasy; but I am not here. This will be one of the last injured houses in the province, as I take it. In short, I think if all people had behaved like the master and mistress of this house, there never had been a rebellion. They are the general parents of this neighbourhood; watching over the concerns, and, by every means, promoting the happiness of all around them.

I did not dine to-day till near seven o'clock, in consequence of our expedition. At nine, I took my coffee, and then retired to my own room, where I am now sitting. I only fear my not loving retirement enough; and the sole uneasiness I experience at this charming place is, lest, by any means, my love of devout retirement should be diminished.

Thursday.

* * * I still omit deciding on the day of my return. I am not sure, however, whether I may not be gratifying myself too much, for "the heart is deceitful above all things;" and here I am, most surely, in very pleasant circumstances: listened to on my favourite subjects with great and strange attention; and better able to talk on them

than I ever was before. But all this, with God's help, shall not lead me to overstay a proper time : I trust I shall ever be jealous of myself in the matter of self-government and self-denial.

Farewell! God bless you!

Believe me your ever faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevue, 1803.

IF you think me ungrateful, I must fully grant I deserve it ; and yet, I can assure you, you are never long together out of my mind. * *

I must tell you a simple fact. When, a few days ago, I was assuring an old and remarkably kind friend and his wife (she at least as affectionate to me as he), that there were but few in the world I could put in competition with them, as to kindnesses shewn me ; to satisfy them I was in earnest, I added, that there were but three—Lord Castlereagh, Miss Fergusson, and an English clergyman whom they did not know. Such was my heart's language. But, indeed, my friend, if I proceed in this careless way of suffering you to write and write, without noticing it, any one less good-natured or less forgiving than yourself might tell me, that my regard was good for so little that I might keep it to myself. * * I am now recovering something of a feeling of health, after severe bilious sickness ; a complaint which seems

to be growing on me. Formerly it never attacked me, except when I happened inadvertently to take perhaps half a glass of wine above my stint. But now it attacks me, I don't know why, nor can I calculate what it may come to. I am not solicitous, however; if God Almighty keeps and establishes me in following that which is good, I have that challenge in my favour, "who shall harm you?"

But you will wish to hear about Ireland. I hope, then, I may say that the alarm of which you have heard, has, as far as human foresight can judge, very much increased our security, by strongly calling forth the energies of the country. I do not think that even in 1798 there was any thing like the extended co-operation that there is just now: so that, if the rebels had been in the pay of government, I cannot conceive how they could have promoted its purposes more effectually than they have done. They have proved their own wickedness, so as to make them detestable; and their weakness, so as to make them, in effect, contemptible; while they have occasioned a greater display of the strength of Irish loyalty than has yet been exhibited.

I was out of town when the disturbance took place, at a gentleman's house, about fourteen miles off, to which I had been so kindly pressed, that I could withstand no longer. There we were in unsuspecting tranquillity, when Dublin was in alarm. We heard it the following day (Sunday se'nnight), as we were preparing to go to church. We were shocked at the murders; but felt little

apprehension; so little, that the next day but one the lady of the house proposed to take me eight miles further into the country, through a tract which, in the last rebellion, had been the scene of a battle. I thought it bold; but I knew she was one of the most beloved characters in Ireland, and, therefore, I would not refuse. All was still; and we had a pleasant excursion. The lady I speak of, is the wife of one of a well-known family in this country, the La Touches. The seat of her husband, Mr. P. La Touche, might, in point of picturesque beauty, though not of magnitude, vie with Hawkstone itself; and I doubt if there could have been a greater relish for religious conversation in Sir Richard's, than I found at Bellevûe. It was because Mrs. La Touche deemed me religious, that she wished so much to have me there.

I am not sure that I feel all this aright: I trust, however, I did not go for selfish purposes; nor, while there, felt selfish satisfactions. Yet I cannot be satisfied that all was as it should be; and I doubt whether my style of talking would not have been condemned by most modern good people, as too philosophical. What I dwelt upon then, and what I generally insist upon, is, the victory of Divine grace over human depravity; the filial access to God, and delight in Him, which flows therefrom; the Divine faith (or knowledge of God, and of Him whom He hath sent,) which is the root of this religion; and the true virtue, and genuine happiness, which are its fruits. I cannot couch my view in fewer, or, I think, in more direct, words; and, therefore, you see I do not touch on matters

which many others deem primary. A Calvinist would be very liberal, if he did not think me blind and pharisaical; and yet, I seriously think that Calvinists teach as scriptural, in many instances, what Scripture has never taught. Their whole view of justifying righteousness appears to me their own fabrication. Nor do I see any other righteousness in the Gospel, but, 1st. The essential righteousness of God; 2d. The divinely personal righteousness of Christ, propitiatory, but never spoken of as imputed; 3d. The graciously imputed righteousness of faith, (that is, God's gracious reckoning of a person as righteous, the moment that true faith in God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, or inward religion, is formed in the heart); and, lastly, the habitual righteousness, or holiness, inward and outward, which flows from this faith as from its source or root. These, I conceive, are all the ideas of righteousness that the New Testament speaks of with approbation. But these, I fear, would appear very deficient.—

N.B. The remainder of the letter is wanting.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Feb. 13, 1804.

* * * During my recent indisposition, I have been sometimes occupied in reading Mr. Orton's letters to you. They bear recurring to, well; being serious, solid, and sensible, in a degree seldom attained to by modern writers. I

see nothing to justify a suspicion I had conceived of his being an Arian; yet I think his views might have been more evangelical. He did not, I conceive, with sufficient ardency of hope, grasp at the present Christian privileges; though, surely, few were ever more attentive to the Christian duties and tempers. I think, if he had been more impressed with the vitalities of the Gospel, his censure of Dr. Taylor's exposition of the Romans would have been more animated. As it is, it is just; but not, I imagine, strong enough, considering the nature of the case. I am inclined to make a similar remark respecting his calling Blair's Sermons evangelical. I think they have no claim to this epithet; at least, a very slight one: there is, surely, much important truth in them; but, to be truly evangelical, is to feel that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation; and, from that feeling, to speak so as to make others feel their wants, and hopefully to seek the true supply. This, and not doctrine (to turn from Blair to others who claim that title), is evangelical preaching; of which, one of the truest exemplifications I have seen in our day, is to be found in Gisborne's Sermons: more truly Christian, in spirit and substance, they could hardly be. His sermon on "Her ways are ways," &c. toward the end, is as beautiful an address as could well be written. I hope and trust he'll improve; and never be sucked into the Calvinistic vortex. Oh! greatly do we want Catholic preachers, who will be above all such things as "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos." "*Si virtus conspiceretur oculis, mirabiles amores*

excitaret," said the Heathen; so say I of Christianity: but who is there to do it justice?

I admire Mr. Orton's general choice of books very much; but I think he hardly thought well enough of Dr. Watts: I read a sermon of his, yesterday evening, to two ladies in this house, on that text, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" and seldom have I been better satisfied with an hour's occupation. It contains the pith and kernel of spiritual religion.

* * * * *

Truly yours always,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Feb. 21, 1804.

* * * I was truly pleased to get a letter from you, and in so comfortable a strain. The only uneasiness you express in it gives me pleasure rather than pain. That "painful apprehension of the account" hereafter, is surely the happiest feeling that can spring up in the human bosom, if it be only followed up, and improved as it should be. But how is it to be improved? is surely as important a question as can be propounded in this lower world. My fixed persuasion, after years of solicitous consideration, is this:—We never can soften this apprehension into cheerful hope merely by being more vigilant over our actions, or becoming more actively beneficent: these are indispensable as adjuncts; but they will not heal a wounded

spirit, or lead alone to a steady peace of mind : indeed, however they may tell in a man's favour, in the view of the merciful and indulgent Father of our spirits, I believe they have no direct efficacy whatever to settle the mind in comfort. Religion, strictly so called, and to us the religion of the Gospel, will alone be adequate for this inward effect. By religion, I mean a steady choice of, and affectionate adherence to, God, as the paramount object of our hearts, and the supreme sum and centre of our happiness ; and, by the religion of the Gospel, I mean the same great end pursued under those more familiarising, yet more elevating views, and with adequate knowledge of, and cordial relish for, those multiplied and invaluable aids which the grand and gracious system of " God manifest in the flesh " implies. Now, to this Divine religion you are, I would hope, in uncommon approximation ; uncommon, I say, not only compared with people in general, but with orderly, good kind of people. Those who, like you, have " a disposition to do good," have not always, much too seldom have, those " holy desires," of which you so justly make account. Far be it from me to depreciate a disposition to do good ; yet I cannot but remember that this might, abstractedly, and as it respects temporal good only, be consistent with atheism ; but " holy desires " have direct and immediate reference to the Father of Spirits, and are the first motions of the true and real life of our souls. In having these, therefore, I do consider you, as compared with others, singularly happy ; and it is in the growth of these

that both your safety and comfort will consist. These are religion in its bud ; and in proportion as these develope themselves and become the ruling principle in the mind, will all right and happy feelings and habits increase and multiply.

Of all means of cherishing these, private prayer I take to be the chief ; and I am sure it is right to cultivate it even in spite of coldness ; for coldness may be overcome by continued exercise, as God will surely bless persevering endeavour ; and when once it is overcome, and an habitual warmth of devotion induced, then, as the Psalmist says, “ Ah ! well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.” On this point, the Bishop of London has nobly and beautifully stated the truth, and nothing but the truth, in the conclusion of his sermon on “ Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.”

Next to private prayer stands, as I conceive, well adapted reading ; that is, of a kind tending to warm at least as much as to instruct. In such works, however, the world at large, just now, is very deficient ; and scarcely should I have been led to such books, if I had not known the Methodists. I am not, however, disposed, except in some exempt cases, to recommend methodistical books, however useful they have been to myself. On the contrary, I always recommend such spiritual works as are at the same time most rational ; and that I might assist in furnishing something of the kind, I undertook the editing anew the Lives written by Bishop Burnet. This volume I have uniformly intended to send to you, but hitherto have yielded to my too usual spirit of postpone-

ment. Your letter, however, has roused me, and therefore I enclose it. I think you will like such of the collection as you have not already read, at least not less than the remainder. May it be the means of real benefit to you!

I must further observe, that I look upon the substance of methodism to be so identical with the central nucleus of Christianity, that I think even Burnet himself might have written his *Lives* better (excellent as they really are), if he had been as much impregnated with it as some of those whose memoirs he has given. Perhaps you startle at this, and say—"My dear friend, do you not remember that John Wesley lived long after those persons?" I do, indeed; but what methodism has been in our days, puritanism was in Burnet's times, and those before him: and I conceive it was the great excellency and happiness of Hale, and Leighton, and Boyle, that they had caught the pure spirit of the best of the sectaries; while, with a true Christian philosophy, they rejected all drossy admixtures. It was the providential destiny, I think, of the Puritans to urge, and in many, indeed innumerable, instances, to exemplify that inward religion, so frequently called fanaticism, which Saint Paul and Saint Peter dwell upon in their Epistles; and which establishments (which seem to me provided to keep up the visible, rather than the invisible, Church) would, perhaps, wholly lose sight of, and reprobate, were they not stimulated and reinvigorated by such anomalous movements. Methodism, in our days, and those of our fathers, I place exactly in the same class; and I

humbly think I have had just such advantage from having a Methodist father and mother, and from having known John Wesley, as Hale had from having a puritanical kinsman and guardian, and through him, being under the tuition, at college, of Obadiah Sedgwick. I said just such advantage, but I may venture, I hope, to suppose my advantage greater, as I really think I have been inoculated from a better tree, and am, thereby, brought into a clearer view of the true Gospel philosophy than I had been, if, instead of Arminian, I had had Calvinist teachers. To preserve my metaphor (if I can), I should then have been confined and kept in one unnatural direction, like a tree nailed to an espalier; whereas, I seem to myself, now, to have more resembled a standard tree, which, uncovered in its growth, strikes out its branches on all sides, according to its own native tendency. In plain prose, I call no man Rabbi.

But, still, the impregnation I speak of, I deem to have been invaluable, inasmuch as it has led me (as it surely led Hale and Boyle*) to seek a sensible inward change; not sensible as to the moment, or hour, or day of commencement, but sensible in alteration of state and feeling: it led us (pardon the presumptuous grouping, but, in this instance, I trust, I may feel like the painter who, on viewing a picture by Raphael, said, "*Anch' io*

* I leave out Leighton here, because it was not from English puritanism, but Scotch presbyterianism, that he got his impregnation; otherwise, he would stand at the top of every class with which I could associate him, as to deep piety.

sono pittore") to rise, in our private walk, above forms and observances, and to seek an efficient internal sense of Divine things, adequate to the subduing of ungodliness and worldly desires, and to the real production and maintenance of predominant spirituality of mind. This really renovated frame, I am confident, is that which the New Testament is full of; which is there called the new creation or creature, the spirit of adoption, the life hid with Christ in God, &c. &c. &c.: but this I never should have known any thing about, if I had not known methodism; nor, if Boyle had never known puritanism, would, in all probability, these remarkable words have ever been in his writings: "But, after a tedious languishment of many months in this tedious perplexity" (a morbid kind of scepticism, which he had fallen into), "at last, it pleased God, one day he had received the sacrament, to restore unto him the withdrawn sense of his favour."

These are Boyle's very words of himself.* I do not quote them because I think such sinkings and deliverances are essential at all to the Christian walk, but because they prove the puritanic or methodistic tincture in Boyle's piety. I mean only to insist on the state of mind he then got into, not his manner of getting into it.

Yet this state our established divines, for the last hundred years particularly, have wonderfully lost sight of; they have brought back "again,"

* In his account of himself, under the name of Philaretus, introduced by Birch, in his *Life*.

I would almost say, in spite of St. Paul, "the spirit of bondage," instead of "the spirit of adoption;" and, instead of representing Christianity with Him as "the power of God unto salvation," they have explained it as little, if any thing, more than a system of rules and motives which we are to follow, as far as the frailty of human nature will allow. To such preaching and writing I attribute the declension of piety in all ranks of the establishment, during the period in which it has prevailed; and it is its prevalence still, which thins the church and fills the conventicle.

There have, however, been noble exceptions. That class to which Bishop Burnet belonged, though, as I hinted above, somewhat less evangelical, at least in appearance, have, nevertheless, done noble justice to inward religion. They do not, I conceive, sufficiently magnify the office (though they by no means lower the nature) of our blessed Saviour. Yet they have caught the vital spirit of his Divine doctrine, and excellently describe the radical change which the influences of God's grace produce where they are cordially implored and vigilantly improved. Lucas's "Inquiry after Happiness" is admirable in this respect. If it is not within your reach, let me know, and I'll endeavour to procure it for you. Scougal's "Life of God in the Soul of Man" is a beautiful epitome of this Christian philosophy. This, I dare say, you have always at hand. But seldom have I found a more luminous view of practical religious principle, than in the little extract which concludes the enclosed volume; the passage, particularly,

which I have marked with a marginal line. I also recommend to your attention the passage similarly marked, in the account of Lord Rochester, beginning on the 154th page. A nobler or clearer testimony to the necessity of an inward change, and of Divine influences in order thereunto, I have scarcely any where else met with.

It is a curious fact, that the spiritual religion of the Gospel should have been so sublimely regarded by those who appear to have been less, comparatively, impressed with evangelic* doctrines. They were, I am sure, inwardly impressed by them; though disgust at the puritanic dialect, which the abuse of so many had made, in their day, very revolting, led them to ideas and expressions of a more philosophical kind. In this, I think, Divine wisdom had probably a grand end to be answered. The puritans had too much unphilosophised the Gospel, both in their views and language; and, therefore, the class of Christian Platonists, just referred to—Whichcote, More, Cudworth, Smith, Worthington, &c.—and those already mentioned, seem, providentially, to have been called up, in order to steer the ship of the Church on another tack. And great and useful they were; and, “being dead, they yet speak” a glorious language. John Wesley owed some of

* Look back to my distinction between religion, as the genus, and Christian religion, as the species, and you will see more clearly what I mean by evangelic doctrines. The Puritans, at least many of them, looked so at the specific marks as too much to lose sight of generic religion: those, therefore, who were providentially raised to correct their error, leaned, proportionably, to the genus; and, therefore, appear to overlook the specific character, that is, the mediatorial.

his best features to those having gone before him ; but he somewhat beclouded his own excellences, by his over love of what was rapid and revolutionary in the inner man. As far as I know myself, I am an eclectic ; I believe, meaning to be more evangelic than the above luminaries, and, possibly so, in reality, Worthington excepted, who was, I should think, a perfect Christian. I am, certainly, more rational and sober than my venerable old friend, though much loving and liking him on many great accounts ; and I am scarcely less philosophical (*pro meâ temitate*) than the latitudinarians, as they were called. So that I seem to myself to enjoy a most pleasant liberty of mind, ranging without restraint,

——— “ *apis matinae*
More, modoque,
Grata carpentis thyma.”

But still, still, keeping the light of Scripture in my view, as the polar star of truth and safety ; and, indeed, only valuing my own thoughts as they are subordinate to, harmonising with, and illustrative of it. One great advantage, I think, I have derived from my unfettered plan, that I do not spoil Christian truths by ill-conditioned phraseology. I use no technical expressions ; and, therefore, have the great pleasure of not offending the ear, nor puzzling, indeed revolting, the understanding ; while I humbly strive to reach the heart. At least, such is my hope concerning myself ; and such, certainly, my endeavour.

It is now time to relieve you. I have thought,

however, that, situated as you are, out of hurry and noise, and having leisure, I might indulge the above described license, without risk of tiring you. I will, therefore, conclude with transcribing for you a passage in our friend Mr. Stedman's last letter to me; which I consider a specimen of genuine, simple Christian piety. It has something of the puritanic spirit, without an atom of disgusting shibboleth. It is, therefore, I think (for reasons already stated), more strictly evangelical than Burnet's conclusion. But you may compare them, and see which you like best; both, surely, being excellent, and both doing substantial honour to our holy religion. He had been speaking of some deceased good men, and then proceeds:—

“ Well, my dear sir, I trust we are following these good men, who are safely arrived in heaven; and, though the sea divides *us*, I am often shaking hands with you. Let us hold on our way, and we shall grow stronger and stronger. Religion never appeared of greater importance to me than at present; and I bless God, I feel the comforts and consolations of it. I am enabled to overcome some difficulties, which I thought I should never have surmounted; and, by the help of my God, I trust I shall leap over every wall. I would live the life of, and maintain a constant nearness to, heaven; be dead to this world, as much as possible, and have my conversation in a better. But I see, daily and hourly, need of circumspection and care, of prayer, and mortifying my corruptions. But I do get better; and to be conformed to the

image of my Saviour, is my great and humble ambition. In Him is all my trust, and on Him alone I rely for every blessing, temporal and eternal." I take this to be Christianity!

Farewell! My blessing attends you. You may feel either like the bishop, or the vicar, and all will be well, here and hereafter.

Always your sincerely affectionate Friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

N.B.—The man who, above all others in his day, or almost in any day, combined all the fore-mentioned excellences, with least mixture of defects, was Richard Baxter; whom, the longer I live, the more I value and revere. His great fault was over-exactness in his demands: this made him a nonconformist; perhaps so best, on the whole.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

March 16, 1804.

* * * I could rather you had not mentioned me to Mr. Browne, as likely to assist in writing about the Caledonian navigation; such a thing being quite out of my power. I never could write where I was not feelingly impressed with the subject; and I cannot, at will, impress myself: I could not even apply my thoughts (without an imperious necessity) sufficiently to comprehend the subject matter. I forget whether I did not mention this already; if I did, you will bear with the repetition.

The fact is, my mind is not what it was. I could, formerly, turn to new subjects with greater ease, because I was, myself, more volatile, and liked the stimulus of novelty. Now, I am much more sedate, and dislike excursiveness as much as ever I loved it. The change is, in part, from advanced life, and a slight degree of *præmatura senectus*; yet is, on the whole, a pleasant and a valuable change. Indeed, I say too little for it; it is a delightful change, for it has restored me to rationality, such rationality as I never had before. But, observe that, in stating a cause, I have said *in part*, for various con-causes have concurred; and a primary, paramount one, without which all the rest had been ineffectual, is, the grace of God.

There is another reason for my not attempting such a thing: I have not time. I need a good deal of time for exercise and mental relaxation. I must give a great deal to the converse of my friends, who permit me to talk to them on such subjects, as to make me feel comfortable, after a whole forenoon spent with two or three visitors: and what remains is too little for writing letters, and, if I could accomplish it, preparing some things for the public eye, which lie in my mind, but which I am yet unable to commit to paper. In this state of things, then, is it not natural for me to shrink from a new subject, foreign to my train of thoughts, and which hundreds can do far, far better than I? When I think of what I must lay aside to undertake such a thing, I am ready to apply what the fig-tree said in Jotham's parable—"Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good

fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?" Every thing is right and useful in its place; but, then, every one has his province; and, certainly, my province is not in any thing which requires matter-of-fact inquiry; nor, do I really think, in any thing which does not directly connect with human happiness. I use the word directly, in order to distinguish between essential components and heightening adjuncts; and, again, between what acts immediately on the mind or feelings, and what operates, mediately and remotely, through external advantages or wants. The former, in both these couplets, are the province of the moralist and the politician; the latter, in both, constitute that of the economist, and the civil engineer or projector. I am a moralist, and a piece of a politician (they are cognate); but I am not a bit of a public economist, or civil projector. I, therefore, am peculiarly unfit for such a business as that in question; for it quite belongs to the civil projector or economist. There is a striking difference between what has to do with the moral world, and that which only regards the material. For example, the question, whether Roman Catholics ought to sit in Parliament? belongs to the moral world; as the ground of doubt is, what will be their own temper there, and their influence on the temper of others. The whole question turns on disposition and feeling. But what advantages will arise to commerce or navigation from the Caledonian canal (though there may be real moral motives for the inquiry), has, itself, nothing to do with moral disposition or feeling; it has quite to

do with this material world, whatever may be the remote and indirect influence on society. This, I am sure, I have more than sufficiently dwelt upon, but I wished you fully to understand me.

Most truly and affectionately yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY DEAR MR. STEDMAN,

April 3, 1804.

* * * The conclusion of your late long letter to me, I not only read with high pleasure myself, but I transcribed it into a letter to George Schoales, the subject of which made it peculiarly suitable, and in which I have since read it to several friends. Don't let your modesty be hurt by this: observe, that it was as making part of a letter of my own I read it. The fact is, I often succeed better in expressing my thoughts, when writing to a friend, than on many other occasions: and, therefore, when I have happened to place some matter in a clearer light than usual, I keep a copy, either of the whole, or that part, and make use of it in conversation with those to whom I speak without reserve. In this way, the conclusion of your letter has come forward more repeatedly than you dreamed of; and, as I almost persuade myself that I made an interesting use of it, I shall probably, some time or other, send you, or give you, a copy of my letter: you will then, I think, own that what you said so humbly and cordially of yourself, just suited my purpose.

Indeed, my friend, you have infinite reason to thank God, that now, as years roll on, and infirmities are making themselves felt, and are sure to multiply, you have the happy consciousness of a life not subject to casualty, and of a growing health which bodily maladies cannot destroy, and will serve to enhance. The difference between him who has, and him who knows nothing of, the power of religion, is infinite at all times: the difference between the natural man and the brute being, really, I may say infinitely, less. But never can this be so strikingly evinced, as when a person grows in comfort just then when others are losing theirs. This is one momentous illustration of that Divine saying—"Not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

"Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt,"

is the voice of mere animal man. The crepuscule of philosophy shewed something better than this:—"O præclarum munus ætatis, si quidem id aufert nobis quod est in adolescentiâ vitiosissimum;" which comes wonderfully near, "delighting in the law of God after the inner man." In short, as "these, not having the law, were a law unto themselves," this sentiment is, clearly, a delighting in that law which was written in their hearts; and has, therefore, in it, a constructive sense, approaching to that of St. Paul in the person of the Jew—"Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" But, beautiful and valuable as those sentiments of enlightened heathens are, and truly interesting

as that fine tract, "De Senectute," is, what could Cicero, or his Cato, say, which could bear the shadow of a comparison with that matter-of-fact observation of the eloquent and pious Wilberforce? "Among men of the world," says he, "a youth of softness and sweetness will often harden into insensibility, and sharpen into moroseness. But it is the office of Christianity to reverse this order. It is pleasing to witness this blessed renovation: to see, as life advances, asperities gradually smoothing down, and roughnesses mellowing away; while the subject of this happy change experiences, within, increasing measures of the comfort which he diffuses around him; and feeling the genial influences of that heavenly flame, which can thus give life, and warmth, and action, to what had been hitherto rigid and insensible, looks up with gratitude to Him who has shed abroad this principle of love in his heart —

‘*Miraturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.*’ ”

I humbly hope, that, in reading your sentiments to my friends, I could give my weak suffrage to their truth and importance. Indeed, I trust I can say, with you, that I never felt the necessity and value of heart-religion more than I do at present; and some changes in my frame, which imply the first symptoms of having passed the summit of the hill of life, make me peculiarly sensible that I should be now a weaker and more wretched being than I ever was before, if Christianity had not taken hold of my heart. I need my religion to keep off alternations in my temper, which I really

think an increase of bilious indisposition almost necessarily exposes one to. But to the grace of God I owe it, that these variations are perceived by none but myself; and they never rise, even within, to such a pitch as to make resisting them an effort. I am sensible of the tendency, and feel the need of vigilance; and that, I hope, is all. But it would not be all, if there were not something of the power of religion to meet and stifle such growths of the fallen nature in their birth. This inward victory I take to be the great privilege of the Christian, strictly so called: it being only "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" which "makes free from the law of sin and death." But what I have to say on this subject, and what I have said above, is, I am sure, true only in a very low sense; as I can only lay claim to the being, but very little, if at all, to the growth of Christianity. Yet, when this influence is real, what a treasure it is! What a heaven upon earth, to be delivered from the bondage of unsubdued, impassioned, unreasonable, silly, savage self, and its great bear-leader, the god of this world! And this, too, but the negative blessing arising from the being interested in a positive good; the immensity of which no thought can grasp, and to the boundless eternity of which the most heightened fancy cannot look forward. I often ask myself, "Am I sure of this? Is there such a thing as being thus interested in the Sovereign of the Universe, the source of infinite comfort, the centre of unassailable safety, the God of unfathomable love, of inconceivable wisdom, and of creative power?" And when I appear to have

in my own bosom, compared with the irrefragable Word of Truth, a matter-of-fact answer, I do indeed wonder at my own happiness, and am amazed how it should be my lot, when I must see it to be so rare a lot. I feel no tendency here to go into predestinarian depths; and am satisfied to suspend the gratification of my curiosity, until "that which is perfect" shall have "come." In the mean time, however, I cannot but wonder.

In these views, however, there is no great excitement of affection; nor indeed, as I said, any thing but bare reality. And often are they painfully obscured, by mental morbidness, by useless thoughts, and by too little government of my tongue; perhaps, indeed, sometimes, by accusations in these respects, which imply weakness rather than guilt; my mind being of that texture that a breath almost disturbs it: and I think this is peculiarly the case when the wind is north-easterly: but, after sinking a little, I get up again; so that, on the whole, I go on better than at any former period. In some things, therefore, you see, you and I might compare notes.

I observe, however, a curious difference in your language and mine, in speaking of the same things; and I conceive both classes of Methodists (Wesleyan and Calvinist) would account your mode of expression more evangelical than mine. Religion contains two sets of truths, which I may venture to denominate ultimate and mediatory; the former refer to God as our original and end; the latter, to the Word made flesh, the suffering, dying, rising, ruling Saviour; the way, the truth, and the life. Now I conceive these two views have

almost ever been varying, in the minds even of the sincerely pious, with respect to comparative consequence: and while some have so regarded the ultimate, (as Tillotson, for instance,) as, in some degree to neglect the mediatory, so others have so fixed their view on the mediatory, as greatly and hurtfully to lose sight of the ultimate. (See the extreme of this, in your curious record of Count Zinzendorf's interview with Doddridge.) But I suspect many are chargeable with the substance of the error, who do not so openly avow it. The Independents, in the latter years of the 17th century, were, in general, more chargeable with this extreme than the Presbyterians, (one great man amongst the former, at least, excepted; I mean Howe :) and I conceive the generality of modern Calvinists fall into the same excess, or defect (for it is both). Now, between these two extremes there is a middle point, where truth, without either excess or defect, resides; and to gain this point ought to be the great object of religious inquiry. As far as I can judge, if you are not just at this point, you are very near it; I hope I am not far off from it; but I am not sure that I am so near it as you. And, I think, it so happens, that our prevalent reading has placed us a point or two on the different sides; you leaning more to the mediatory truths than I have yet been brought to, (still, however, I hope, for my own sake, chiefly in expression;) you having read more of the writings of pious nonconformists than I; I, on the other hand, reading authors a good deal, who, I think, are

peculiarly spiritual, but whom modern Calvinists would hardly allow to be evangelical. Now, I take it, the nonconformists were peculiarly designed, by Divine wisdom, to maintain the mediatory truths; and when the prevalent party of them lost sight (too much) of the ultimate truths, the latitudinarians, Smith, Whichcote, Worthington, Scougal, and Lucas, were raised to insist on these. With the writings of the class I now speak of, I have been conversant; and, I hope, with advantage. But, I must own, they seem rather too much to lose sight of the mediatory truths, though they were excellent men and bright luminaries. But does not St. James do so, compared with St. Paul and St. Peter? I, however, have not been left to these; but have been, I hope, made more evangelical than they, by those two transcendent men, Baxter and Leighton: in the first of whom I think there is the soundest divinity, and in the latter, the deepest piety, that has appeared since the apostolic age. Now, as I take it, you look to these two with little less veneration than I: but you have added to them a set of select Puritans chiefly; and I have associated with them, in my reading, the above-named Platonists. Hence, and hence only, (I hope, as I said, for my own sake,) arises a shade of difference in our accustomed language. In short, I am sure your views are right; and I hope I have substantially the same. There are two moderns, whom I think we'll join in associating with those who have "taught and led the way to heaven," Doddridge and John Wesley. You, probably, owe most to

the former ; but what do I not owe, subordinately, to the latter ? Here I must break off, leaving, perhaps, my meaning not quite clear.

Always yours, while

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevue, June 6, 1804.

* * * This morning I awoke in rather an uncheerful frame, reflecting on too great an exuberance of talk last night : but, after a time, my mind righted (as the sailors say), and now I am again calm and peaceful. Sweet, sweet religion ! what would my frail and ever-varying spirits come to, if I were not anchored in this sheltered harbour ! or, rather, if I were not brought out of all troubled waters, and committed to this safe, right-directed, and gently flowing stream, that both keeps me secure and carries me forward, through, I trust, still pleasanter and happier tracts, until it carries me into the great ocean of eternity.

I hope this is not too fine talking ; and yet, on reviewing it, I fear it is rather more than I am entitled to ; and what the feelings of a few hours might oblige me to doubt the justness of. Yet I do go on pretty well. And I trust, notwithstanding your dissipation, you'll go on pretty well too.

* * * * *

Yours most affectionately, and *ever*,

ALEX. KNOX.

I added *ever*, because always seemed a word

only extending to the world that now is; but I cannot *so* limit my expressions of regard to you.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

June 16th, 1804.

* * * Mr. — has actually taken a small furnished house in this city, and has visited me two evenings successively. It is painful to me to repress any visitant, but this will not answer my purposes either for body or mind. I must, therefore, by whatever means, preserve my liberty. I am morally certain I can do him no manner of good, and it is my duty to see that I suffer no hurt. But I should suffer hurt, were I to spend many such evenings as yesterday. I doubt if it would not shortly make me relapse into all that nervousness, of which you have been a commiserating witness; and from which, through the mercy of Heaven, I have astonishingly been rescued. Living apart from secular conversation has been a great means of tranquillising my mind: but more secular conversation, not to be offensive, I could not meet any where than I was obliged to listen to last night, until he evidently saw that he was outsitting my patience. The fact is, he knows not what to do with himself, now that France is finally shut up against him, and that he cannot, I presume, conveniently bring a number of *emigrés* about him. To-night, I shall have to visit a new-married couple who wish me to drink tea with them; probably, therefore, I shall not be obliged to speak out

to-night. I say *probably*, because Mr. ——'s hours are so anomalous, that I may be returned, and, as I might hope, be quiet for the night, before he may think of coming. I may, therefore, be, this night, obliged to say what I think of, with downright uneasiness: it must be, however, or even Sunday night might not be my own. Don't think me harsh in this: I really cannot help it. I can now, in some degree, spend my time comfortably and usefully; and I cannot, therefore, answer it to my conscience to throw whole great portions of it away on an uncomfortable hopeless waste. Besides, Providence has led me out of the folly of the world; I cannot, therefore, suffer it needlessly to flow in again upon me.

I have got the additional volume of Cowper's Life, which is all letters: many of them most interesting; all, pleasant. What a sweet creature he was! But never could he have been so, if he had not become evangelically infantile. Sure I am, that the peculiarly exquisite grace of Cowper's whole composition owes its very life and soul to his having been, as he was, so decisively "turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God." I soberly believe it is yet unknown to mankind, what depths of human improvement and felicitation, individual and collective, lie hid in that little volume, the Holy Scriptures.

Believe me always most affectionately yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Caermarthen, August 28th, 1804.

* * * I preferred my present route, for the sake of travelling through South Wales, and, also, for seeing some of my own country, which I had never before visited; and in no one respect have I been disappointed. My line in Ireland was seriously interesting, as it passed through the respective scenes of the three great conflicts between the loyalists and the rebels, in 1798; all of them being either within the county of Wexford, or on its border: and this, strange to tell, one of the finest, most English-looking districts in Ireland. My view of the goodness, as well as strict opportuneness, of Divine Providence, in those momentous instances, was made clearer and more impressive by an actual inspection of their local circumstances; and I got some idea of the transactions, which my mind can seldom obtain from mere narration.

My voyage, too, was highly pleasant; the scenes, both of embarkation and landing, being uncommonly picturesque. But my land journey, since, short as it has been, has exceeded all the rest in beautiful scenery. Every portion of the way from Haverfordwest to this place has presented fresh landscapes; so that, instead of feeling the tediousness of steep ascents and indifferent roads, I could often have wished to check the speed of the horses, that my eyes might feast the longer on the harmless luxuries that were before me. I

have written it, and it must stand; but it is too gross a figure for such pure pleasure. This morning, the approach to the town, where I now am, was delightful; and I am writing, at this moment, in a room which I am absolutely loath to leave. Such a situation, in an inn, I never before met with. The view from the balcony, before which I sit, is delightful; and it is made still more interesting, by the river which glides through it—the Towy, which Dyer has made classical in his exquisite “Grongar Hill:” a scene which I shall hardly pass without visiting it; that poem being one of my chief favourites.

My dear madam, pardon this talk; and kindly make allowance for the existing circumstances of

Your most faithful and affectionate

Friend and Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

P.S.—In my Irish journey, I had a satisfaction beyond any other, after your note: I mean, spending the three last days I was in Ireland with a truly pious clergyman, whose deep and zealous sense of inward religion is accompanied with such a charming candour, as produced substantial harmony between him and me; though we have been taught in very different schools: he being of the Calvinistic class, and I (as I take it) of no class at all; generic Christianity being, to the best of my knowledge, my object and study. Observe the Irishman! “taught in different schools,” and “I of no class.” Well! it tells what I mean; and that is enough.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSON,

Friday, Aug. 31, 1804.

THIS day I have terminated my Welsh tour, being now at Abergavenny: a handsome town, with a very good inn, in Monmouthshire; that is to say, in England. The conclusion of my Welsh journey was like the commencement and progress—most beautiful. Indeed, I doubt whether the landscapes of this day did not outdo all the rest, except merely the panorama from the top of Grongar. Such hills and valleys as we passed through! In fact, the hills, as well as the valleys, are so richly cultivated, that they exhibit one vast tissue of hedgerows, thickening, frequently, into close and extensive plantations; and still more frequently enlivened by villages or single houses, in situation and appearance finely adapted to the general scene. In a word, such has been the unbroken series of variegated richness, of—

“ Hill and dale,

With liquid lapse of murmuring stream,”

and often, indeed, the noble flow of large rivers—(the Towy first, and then the Usk, having, as it were, accompanied us these three last days), that this day I actually felt a kind of fresh pleasure at the view of some mountains in a state of rude nature: the very mountains, by the way (as I take it), that Dyer saw, from Grongar, in the remote distance, and of which he makes so noble a moral use:—

“ As yon summits, soft and fair,

Clad in colours of the air,

Which, to those who journey near,
Barren, brown, and rough appear ;
Still we tread the same coarse way,
The present's still a cloudy day."

God be praised! this last is not true respecting me; nor respecting any who have learned the blessed art of praying to that Father who seeth in secret, and who heareth in all places. I have written the above description as if I had been much pleased: and so I was; but it was not animal gaiety, nor the effect of novelty (for, I conceive, I was duller in my spirits, during this journey, than in many former jaunts of amusement): it was chiefly the effect of a mind tolerably at ease; and, therefore, capable of being much pleased, though little excited. This distinction few could understand a great deal better than your quiet self.

September 1, 1804.

On arriving here, I found two notes: one from Mr. Stock; the other from Hannah More. Which of the two is the kinder, I should be much at a loss to determine. But, really, I am amazed at the pleasant circumstances with which Divine Providence surrounds me. Yet, alone, they would be a curse, and not a blessing. I hope Divine grace accompanies them in my instance; if so, all will work for good.

Michael, I think, is the greater enthusiast of the two, respecting things to be looked at. He has been particularly attracted by ruins and old castles; and will carry back with him a large set

of new pictures in his imagination. He is, to be sure, a first-rate fellow; and has been a main feature in the pleasantness of the journey.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Barleywood, Sept. 10, 1804.

SHALL I never learn to be more deliberate? I thank God, a more attentive view, and more particular and continued intercourse, has made me most comfortably and cordially retract the rash opinion which I formed respecting some things that struck me on coming here. I have the heart-felt pleasure of finding myself mistaken in every material supposition of an unfavourable kind. I have wished, as soon as possible, to say thus much to you, in order to remove the unpleasant feeling which my observations on little matters, imperfectly seen, and inconsiderately reasoned upon, must have caused, where the subject is so justly interesting to you, and of so much importance, even to the general concern of religion.

I am, I must say, most solicitous that those I love should be as perfect as possible; and, perhaps, my standard of perfection may be too much taken from views and habits of my own. Modes of speaking and behaviour, therefore, which, in themselves, may be purely incidental, and perfectly indifferent, may (merely from that narrow habit) give me uneasiness. I am sure you yourself have experienced some effects of this, in that un-

restrained conversation which you have been so good as to encourage me to. And I should recollect them with a severer self-censure than I actually do, if you had not turned them into occasions of exercising Christian candour and meekness. Your humility (may it be still more and more!) made my rigid remarks fall so easily, that even *I* escaped the pain, to which, except on account of good intention, I might have, almost in justice, been liable. But I did mean well; and you always saw I did: you have borne with me accordingly; and I trust you'll still bear with me.

The simple fact is, I should wish to alter or correct many little matters in the very great character with whom I now have intercourse. But I more and more see, and I rejoice in the conviction, that they are little matters. All that I see cause to lament is, that they are liable to be taken for more than they mean, as in the instance which you mentioned to me as having occurred with some one at Cheltenham. I have actually reproved her for some such unchastised saying, within these twenty-four hours; and she took it critically as you would wish. Indeed, she has talked to me of the treatment she has met with, with an explicitness that let me see into her feelings. And I had great pleasure in perceiving that the very purposes which I, at the time, supposed them providentially intended for, were the very use to which she had endeavoured to turn them: I mean, the more complete disentanglement of her mind from secular tastes and connexions. I do, therefore, think that she is solidly improved by them;

and that, if, in any instance, a sign of less chastised tempers might be thought to appear, it is really not what it seems, but the mere result of a peculiarly lively and poignant manner, both of thinking and speaking.

The intercourse, therefore, as you may believe, between her and me, is exceedingly pleasant; and such as I consider a great mental and moral luxury, indulged to me by the special kindness of Heaven. I have been here, now, just eight days; and I suppose I shall stay eight days longer. My love to you all; but most especially to yourself; and, next to you, to that man of kindness, your husband.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY VERY DEAR MADAM,

Barleywood, Sept. 14th, 1804.

HERE I continue, far beyond my first intention; and shall probably stay for more than a week longer. I see more and more reason for blaming myself for my first rapid opinion; and become still more deeply satisfied with the spirit, temper, and conduct of our excellent friend. She is really a most extraordinary person; such as, I am sure, is not in the world again. So much power of mind, united with such simplicity of purpose, and humility of heart! In fact, I apprehend there is no such thing as knowing any one, without being for some time domesticated. Then, by observing the course from morning to night, and from one day

to another, a complete idea of the character is obtained. Such has, now, been my pleasant and valuable lot respecting Hannah More. And, much as I have revered her, I assure you my increased intimacy and more detailed knowledge will make me love her more than ever.

Sept. 19th.

I leave this, certainly, on Saturday. I must say, that Hannah More has risen, and not fallen, in my estimation, by my being so long at her very elbow. She is a wonderful creature. But, in you, in me, and in her, there is still much room for correction and improvement; though I greatly value both of you, and am not wholly dissatisfied with what the gracious God has been, in infinite mercy, pleased to do in my most unworthy self.

My chief regret is, that, though she is not, in the centre of her heart, one bit worldly, or vain, or self-complacent; yet she has, still, more connexion with the world than I conceive conducive to her happiness, or to her moral and spiritual advancement. What Providence clearly calls us to, need not hurt us. So much of the world is, as it were, within an invisible paling, through which the rulers of the darkness of this world cannot burst. But, when we go farther, we get into something of the situation of the Christian woman, whom Tertullian tells of, that went to the theatre, and returned home possessed by a demon. And, when the exorcist (an officer then in the Church) was questioning the demon how he could dare to enter into one of the faithful—"I did it most justly," answered he; "for I found her on my own ground." I do

not mean, that when we go beyond the invisible paling, we share this fate of necessity ; but I mean, that we are in some sort of danger, being, in some degree, in the situation which the demon described. I do not quote this, as absolutely vouching for its truth ; but it is illustrative of my purpose : and let Tertullian answer for its reality ; which, by the way, he does most solemnly.

Yesterday evening, two neighbouring clergymen came : one for the afternoon ; the other, to stay a day or two. You may judge how I felt, sitting between them, when I tell you that the one spoke of Leighton as absolutely next to the Scriptures ; the other talked, in a manner the most unaffectedly cordial, of the *great* Baxter. The Baxterian is a Mr. Jones ; a man of most impressive simplicity. The Calvinist (for such is the other) is a thoroughly transmuted man of fashion, a Mr. Whalley. With this latter it is that I am engaged to go to the house of his brother ; which is in a remarkable situation, on the hill, just opposite : you must have observed, from this window, a house perched so high on the hill as to attract observation. I am not going of my own motion ; for I would not, of my own mere choice, go to any fashionable house (and such it is) to dinner. But, the gentleman having called on me, his saint-like brother accompanying me, and Hannah More thinking it expedient, I acquiesce.

So, my worthy and kind friend, good morning ; and may God's blessing ever be upon you !

Yours most faithfully,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

Barleywood, Sept. 17, 1804.

Nothing can be prettier than this spot; nor any thing kinder than the people. I am actually made overmuch of; but that is so easy a trial, that I can submit without struggling: only I do not eat and drink as variously, or as largely, as the hospitable senior of the family seems to think proper. I have, I believe, told you that there are three sisters older than Hannah.

I am not in robust health; and, I believe, I hardly ever shall: but this day I am tolerable. I think I am rather dull in my feelings; I hope, however, it is more in my body than in my mind: but I sometimes feel not a little uneasiness, lest there should be any decline in me. A religious life is a sweet life; and, were I ever to grow less engaged in religion than I am, all peace and comfort must go too. This evening I walked on the higher parts of the hill where this house stands, contemplating the setting sun. He was, indeed, as Milton describes,

“ Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds, that on his western state attend.”

And I could not help thinking on the glorious happiness of reckoning, with certainty, on the Maker of that beauty and brightness as our Father and Friend. Surely I am (and I hope I ever shall be more and more) convinced that nothing in this world is worth a serious thought,

but the religion of the heart. May God deepen it in you and me!

Ever your faithful and affectionate Friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bristol Hotwells, Sept. 22, 1804.

I HAVE long been meditating a letter to you. I promised that I would write; and, if I had been disposed to forget my engagement, I have been, for these last three weeks, with persons who would not suffer me to forget it,—our friends, the Mrs. Mores. Their inquiries were, I assure you, becoming themselves. * * * *

I dare say, notwithstanding my attempt to be interesting, I have been a little trying your patience. At another time, all this would have been very well: but to begin with Barleywood, and instantly quit it again; and, notwithstanding all your desire to know about Hannah More, to carry you back to Ireland, and then through South Wales, and then to poetry and old divinity,—was it not a little perverse? But, at last, you are back; for I could not detain you longer with any decency. In short, then, Hannah More is wonderfully well; enjoying, to a very competent degree, one of the finest spots in the British Empire. It is, I may say, but a field; yet such is the variety of ground within, and such the extensiveness of prospect without, and, moreover, such the exquisite adaptation of the house, and the form and disposition of its rooms

to the site, and such the care to embellish the grounds, that every day almost, more and more, I thought this just a gift of all-gracious Providence to Hannah More, to soothe her after all her troubles. Of those troubles, she and I largely talked ; and, I assure you, she spoke with regard and gratitude of your endeavours, at that time, to lessen her uneasinesses. She now views them just as she should, and feels in her heart that she needed them ; and that they have, in some degree, answered their end, in separating her still more from worldly objects and feelings. Her whole character appears to me advanced since I first saw her. She and I harmonised wonderfully ; and I every day felt, almost, amazement, at finding myself so regarded, so valued, and so confided in, by such a truly eminent personage — a personage, I do believe, which could scarcely,—rather, could not,—in all instances, be paralleled in this present age. We had a conversation (as the Italians call it ; or, as the simpler Indians of North America, a talk,) regularly thrice a-day ; but the grand one was the evening's one, extending from tea to supper ; intermixed, however, with select reading, in which I was generally the officiator. In fact and truth, the “ *Noctes Cœnæque* ” of Horace, with all his poetry of description, were the shadow of a shade compared with ours ; and exquisite Cowper's winter evenings, wherein time

“ Had a dove's wing,
Unsoil'd and swift, and of a silken sound,”

did not, I soberly think, come up to them. Our

conversations were utterly unsecular, ever referring to what this world can neither give nor take away ; and yet containing every thing that her mind, or my mind, has of liveliness or variety. It looks almost like vanity thus to adjoin my mind to that of Hannah More ; but, truly, I felt her superiority, both of native powers and acquired knowledge : it gave, however, no idea of abatement to the pleasure ; divine Christianity being an effectual cure for all those follies and vices. Still, too, I could bring forth, on subjects which I had more peculiarly cultivated, some things new, even to Hannah More ; and to add information, or useful matter for reflection, to such a mind as her's, could not but be felt as a high favour of gracious Providence. Be it as it may, both she and all her sisters were as kind to me as was possible ; and it was enjoined upon me, as a thing not to be denied, that I must, on Hannah More's return from a visit which she is to pay, and another which she is to receive, that is, in about a fortnight from this, return to them for a few days more, before my departure from this neighbourhood. Hannah More and I are substantially of the same school ; that is, we both make it our object to pass through the form of godliness to the power thereof. They who agree with us in this,—be they Calvinists or Remonstrants, Presbyterians, Independents, or even Anabaptists,—may have intercourse with us, useful and pleasant to us and to them. But between all anti-fanatics (as they deem themselves) and us, there is, as it were, a great gulf fixed. We have not any common ideas to ex-

change, nor any common ground whereon to meet. There may be kind and friendly converse, and real mutual regard; but no intermixture of hearts: for in the mysterious difference of which I speak, it is the heart, and not the understanding, which is concerned; and there is want of harmony, not because the parties do not think, but because they do not feel, alike.

Alas! what is life, after all, without these very, too generally, neglected and suspected feelings? I trust He who tries all hearts, knows that the very pleasure I have had, more or less, in every part of my present journey, could not have had existence without them. I verily think, were I to lose them wholly for one day, that day would see me replunged into as deep a gloom, yea, and deeper, than I ever seemed to you to suffer. I am now, to be sure, encompassed with pleasant circumstances; but even these would add to my misery, instead of causing my happiness, if these infinitely more substantial comforts did not possess my heart: for without this, I should grow vain; and deeply do I know that vanity is both depravity and wretchedness:—being the one, it must be the other. In short, there is no enjoyment of this world till it be substantially under our feet. Before, it is the master, and we slaves. When we have conquered it, then we may use it at our pleasure: but, “who is he that overcometh the world?” &c.

Remember me in the kindest manner to Mrs. H., and to your sister. To these two I have a very cordial attachment. I trust they have both

in them the germ of endless happiness : but, what culture does it need in us all !

Yours, my dear Friend, most truly,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

Bristol, Oct. 1, 1804.

* * * I meet daily and hourly the same kindness ; my friends, here, thinking of me more highly than I have a just title to ; though, I dare say, they are not blind to my weaknesses, for I am sure I often transgress the bounds of strict wisdom by eagerness of talk. Not that I am grown worse, in this respect, since I left you ; but that, being obliged to talk a great deal, and often to talk my best, I am more exposed to such excesses than usual. My visit, however, here, must soon terminate. I may go to Cheltenham for health ; but I shall not be induced to stay any time there, except I were to feel a striking change for the better, as I really apprehend I have got nearly as much good by my travelling as I could fairly expect. I have not been one day sick since I left Dublin ; yet, notwithstanding, I feel an inward weakness, which continually sticks to me. And, though it seldom amounts to uneasiness, it makes me much less alert in body, and even in spirits.

When I speak of my spirits, I do not mean the real state of my mind ; but the feeling of languor, and unwillingness to exertion, particularly to writing, and, sometimes, to reading. My usual sen-

sation is, that, if I am not walking, I could always wish to recline myself; my body seeming insufficient to support rightly its own weight. But all this signifies little: it is in better hands than mine; and, I humbly trust, all will work together for good.

I certainly have got a greater love of quietness than once I thought possible; and, what is an invaluable concomitant, I have got rid of that great perturbedness (at least, in a good degree) which unfitted me for new scenes, or for going at all into company. Now, when clearly called, I seem, comparatively, strong enough for all such situations. And it is no small benefit of moving about, to have thereby an occasion for trying one's strength, and marking progress.

Ever yours, my valued Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY WORTHY FRIEND,

Bristol, Oct. 1, 1804.

* * * Just as I was concluding the last paragraph, a Mr. — called upon me, to lead me to Mr. Biddulph, if I should be willing to accompany him. I made no objection, thinking I might soon accomplish the visit. But — what think you? Mr. Biddulph so took to me, and was so interested by my talk, that I actually sat, I believe, two hours with him; and had, on parting, a most warm request to repeat my visit. This, I own, was much more than I expected. I hoped not to

annoy him ; but, to please him was far beyond my expectation. I am glad of it ; as I conceive nothing can be more desirable than that persons, of apparently different sentiments, should be made more and more coalescent in matters of common and infinitely important concern.

* * * * *

On the whole, this jaunt has, altogether, been very pleasant to me. I have been in much more variety of scenes and company than is customary for me ; and, yet, my thoughts and feelings have generally been calm and quiet. This, to me, who was once the very shuttlecock of circumstance, and was thrown almost into a fever by any difficulty, or even by change of place, is a most comfortable and happy change. Truly, I am more and more satisfied that religion, fully and heartily embraced, is a remedy for every thing ; and that the 23d Psalm is no more than a simple statement of the real case, when things are, substantially, what they should be, in the principles and temper. We think our weaknesses and frailties are so inherent in us, that there is a kind of necessity of nature for their continuing ; and, therefore, we rather make up our minds to bear them, than look for their removal. Thus, even H. More was, at first, disposed to revolt from my favourite doctrine of Christian perfection (as taught by Lucas) ; but, after more talk, she seemed greatly to yield, and rather to fear she should not, or could not, attain it, than that the thing was unattainable. But even this despondency is wholly unfounded, inasmuch as "it is God that worketh in us." My mind

clearly is, that what we want we should ask; leaving it to God's omnipotence, and to that mysterious and adorable modification of it—the grace of Christ,—to do the work: we endeavouring, as much as possible, from hour to hour, to avoid what might retard it, and to use, to the utmost, all the grace we have.

In this way, I do believe, the highest moral expectations may be cherished; none of which, after all, can go beyond Ephesians, iii. 14, &c. In thus talking, I am not conscious of using one word rhetorically, nor of advising what I do not, according to my weakness, endeavour to practise; and, truly, it is a method which I have no ground to relinquish. May He, “without whom nothing is strong—nothing is holy,” increase in you and me, and work in all we are concerned for, this sure and ever-present source of comfort.

My sincere regards wait always on Mr. La Touche; and as to yourself, you are a downright resident in my mind.

Believe me

Your ever affectionate and faithful Friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Bristol, Sunday night, Oct. 7.

* * * My principle, certainly, is to do what strikes me as right, regardless of praise or blame; and I do not see but you may be doing one of the best things possible for your

young men,* by letting them contract a Methodist bias, if they will. I really see not, at this day, where else the necessary aids for piety in low life are to be had; and such is the destiny of things, that even piety must have its continued props and pinnings. While these persons are under your eye they may go on pretty well; but I almost fear they are not provided with sufficient means of safety, without religious friends on their own level. We read in Malachi (as I think has, more than once, occurred in our conversation), that, at a time of great and general degeneracy, especially among the priesthood, "then, they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard," &c. This, you and I knew the pleasure and advantage of; indeed, I should be as a sparrow upon the house-top without it. What but this is it that makes this visit to England delightful to me? And what but this, my kind and worthy friend, makes me love Bellevûe? But what is to become of such persons as you speak of, respecting this most necessary means of grace and comfort of life, if they do not cultivate an acquaintance with the Methodists? It is in this view that I have long considered Wesleyan methodism peculiarly useful as a rallying point for plebeian piety. I acknowledge it is far from being what I wish it; and, therefore, if I was sure and satisfied that even a working man would go on as well to the full without it, I would not suggest his forming such an acquaintance, (though I seriously

* The young men alluded to were the gardener's apprentices.

doubt the likelihood of my having such satisfaction): but, when I saw an inclination, I would not dare to repress it. I firmly believe that the Methodist Society is a providential scheme both for the purpose I have mentioned, and for greater: I believe, notwithstanding many deformities, and much barky integument, there is, and ever has been, a solid kernel of vital piety within. I would, on no account, discountenance any person in lower life connecting himself with them, but rather do all I could to guard him against the abuses; which, after all, I am sorry to say, appear to me so real and so lamentable, that, though my mind has long been made up, in the manner and to the amount I have stated, it is not out of absolute approbation of the Methodist system that I have so resolved, but because I know nothing to put in its stead, and do deem something necessary.

* * * If they will be Methodists, as I said, it will be your part to cherish and regulate their methodism, by letting them see that all goodness does not belong to their society; but that one unconnected with them may be just as strict and pious, even in the most tempting situation, as themselves. This is a lesson which the Methodists need every where to be taught: they who are candid and right-hearted rejoice in every such fact; they who are bigoted require such facts to check their assumption.

As to your dissatisfaction with yourself, I acknowledge to you fairly, it gives me no uneasiness. Such feelings ever have attended, and ever must attend, a religious progress in its earlier stages.

Some others would be apt to say, it must still remain: I say no such thing. I believe it is salutary for the present; and, so long as there is "need" for such "heaviness" (1 Pet. i. 6.), it will, no doubt, remain. Yea, and it would and must ever remain, if it rested with you to get rid of it. But, seriously, to yourself I say, I well know the feeling; and I also know, in a wonderful degree, what it is to be delivered from it. Many a time I have said, like David, "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." But my resource was, always, prayer, mingled with the deepest reading (I mean spiritually deep) that I could find; and I was almost always aided for the present; and, at length, relieved radically and surprisingly (though most gradually). There is a mass of instruction and comfort in one single text, which I (the weakest being that well could be) can really, I hope, give witness to the truth of. I leave you to look for it:—Phil. iv. 6, 7. I verily think, if we only desire sincerely and ask steadily, we are safe. And God has ways and means of strengthening and comforting us, far beyond our narrow calculation. He can cause strength and tranquillity to grow up in our minds "night and day, men know not how." It is well, very well indeed, to feel a growing detachment from the world; for, though the opposite right feeling may not grow as sensibly, it will infallibly follow, when the proper means are persevered in. Why should you attribute to advancing years, what you owe to so much better a cause? Look round, and see whether advancing years produce such effects on those much older.

No, my good friend: you complain of nothing but what Baxter himself complains of in his dying thoughts, and in that recapitulation of his life and opinions, which you know: which recapitulation, by the way, Hannah More has observed to me, to be deserving of a distinct publication. It was often my own thought; and I was, of course, more confirmed in it by her coinciding with me. I will only add, concerning yourself, that the one use to be made of every uneasiness, is to turn it into matter of prayer; to the essence of which, affectionate emotion is certainly not necessary. The prayer of emotion may have even less real faith in it; as it is difficult to feel emotion, and not expect, from that very emotion, some of the aid we pray for (in the way of mechanical efficacy). But he who prays without emotion, if prayer be steady and persevering, comes in some shape nearer the faith of Abraham, "who, against hope, believed in hope." And such hope never was, nor ever will be, disappointed.

I am just going to Bath, to see two or three friends there. On Friday, I mean to return to Mrs. More, and stay with her until within about a week of my setting out for Ireland, which will be about three weeks from hence.

My sincere love attends Mr. L.

Believe me ever

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

North Parade Coffee House, Bath,
Oct. 14, 1804.

* * * This is a wonderful place : a cream-ewerful skimmed off the great pan of London. I feel no inclination to taste, yet I do not dislike to look at it. It is, in a striking degree, the epitome "of many-coloured life." Time was when I feared to look, lest I should be drawn into the vortex. I hope it is not from presumption (I am pretty confident it is not) that that fear does not, now, greatly annoy me. I can look ; and, I trust, humbly, yet cordially, congratulate myself on being so much more happily attracted. I do not know but the view of the "bustle and the raree show" makes me relish my own quiet the more ; which, so far as it prevails, is just as it should be. Blessed be God, that I am as I am ! Here I sit alone for six or seven hours together ; and yet my mind does not sink. I have no solicitude about any thing earthly ; and, therefore, do not participate either in the risings or sinkings of earthly feeling. This is not the case in any eminent degree, but it is substantially so ; and, I hope, will be more strongly so. I am, I think, a New Testament Christian ; but I may be a much more mature one. In the mean time, I have my share in the enjoyments as well as the exemptions. I have great, great subjects to turn my mind to ; and, though I do not feel them as powerfully as I should, yet, I humbly trust, my view of them is not that of a passing stranger. "All

things are yours," is a grand word, and leaves room for grand contemplations ; in comparison with which, emperors (old and new) shrink up into pigmies, and all their grandeur seems a night vision. Little, little do I feel of these things ; but that little I would not exchange for the fee-simple of the created universe. My blessing ever attends you.

Always yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON, Barleywood, Oct. 19, 1804.

* * * When I did meditate staying for some time at Bath, I had resolved against dining abroad, except with the Archbishop of Cashel and Dr. Woodward : but I am now very glad I am not called upon to exert such a resolution ; as, really it would have been difficult to persevere in preferring downright solitude to pleasant company. Yet I did so for the few days my determination lasted. When I relinquished it, I went out daily till I left Bath, knowing that I was in no danger of continuing the practice ; and having strong motives to it for the particular time. I steadily, however, shunned invitations, except when I thought something useful was to be done : and, I own, I now look back on my visit to Bath—much as on my visit to Mr. Stock—with satisfaction, and, I trust, with thankfulness. I almost think I did good at Bath. It was all very curious how I was led to talk, and how those who heard me were pleased ; and surprised at having, as it were, religion pre-

sented to them in so different a form from that to which they had been accustomed. We can judge of little from appearance ; but I cannot help hoping that, in all parts of this little excursion, I have been more guided by the will of Providence, than by any will of my own. * *

Barleywood, October 23, 1804.

I just write a line to tell you, I go on pretty well. I am, as you may believe, in the pleasantest situation in this world ; and yet, seriously, I assure you, I shall feel a certain peculiar satisfaction when I am clearly on my way home. I am not without fear, that the high ground on which I have been standing exposes me to stronger blasts of temptation to self-complacency than I am fully equal to resist ; and, therefore, my heart looks again for privacy. It is not my will, but, I think, something providential which still a little detains me ; and I almost tremble lest, during the little time which remains, I should not lose ground, or should have, imperceptibly, lost it already. But I hope it will not be so. It would be so, were I my own keeper ; but I trust God will save me from myself.

Barleywood, Oct. 29.

I have had apprehensions at the thought of some sort of unfeelingness about those only realities growing upon me. I hope this fear is groundless ; but this has been rather a nervous day with me. On such occasions my feelings vary, and, when they do, my spirits sink : for, verily, I do believe, were I to lose a single portion of my

religion, I should run down like a watch whose barrel-spring is broken. As it is, religion is my daily, and almost hourly, feast. It saves me from that irksomeness which is my constitutional penalty; and which (were this divine prop wanting) would soon crush me to the earth. But my whole peace depends on my not being overcome of any evil; for, were I to grow proud, or peevish, or self-conceited, or eager about any thing, I should sink at once; the barrel-spring, as I said, would be broken. God, I trust, has hitherto kept me, during this visit to England, from these things happening to me; yet never was I so caressed as at this time. * * * * *

This must be my last entire week here. I may stay to the beginning of the next; but that can be all. Company are coming, which give me a fair dismissal, after, I trust, not an useless visit. I hope I have not been wholly idle, as you'll know when we talk. I shall go one day to Bath; spend the remainder of the week at Bristol; and on Monday, November 12th, I hope to be on my way. * * * * *

Barleywood, Nov. 5.

* * * My dear niece was, certainly, not dearer to me. I was then incapable of feeling as deep affection as I feel now; for religion has both given steadiness and tenderness to my mind: so that now, I trust, I am both more capable of returning friendship, and of loving worth, with that love which eternity will perfect.

Ever, more than words can express,

Your faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Barleywood, Oct. 30, 1804.

* * * I want you to be very strong and very firm with the world. Poor creature as I am, I trust I have a little of this; and the comfort I feel in a steady, made-up, independent mind, makes me wish more of it to myself, and much of it to you. It is neither more nor less than good sense and sound principle in combination, resting on their own truest and most natural (indeed, their only real) basis,—that eternal, immutable, law of rectitude, “whose seat is the bosom of God; whose voice, the harmony of the world.” He, whose mind is thus established, has habitual filial access to the living source of the universe, the parent of life and peace. “If our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.” To be rooted and grounded in this holy habit and privilege is, surely, a heaven upon earth.

If our way to this were by a ladder, to be ascended step by step, as our own efforts would enable us, our view of it would, I think, be but like that of Moses from Mount Nebo. But, first, Paul tells us, that salvation “is of faith, that it may be of grace:” meaning, that it does not depend upon a slow series of efforts, but upon an inward temper; which, when possessed, does the business: and which temper, God is ready to work in all who only fix their hearts upon it. We think, how shall I be able to do such or such a thing? to bear such a trial? to keep a spiritual mind in such circumstances? to think of so many

things without distraction ? Why, of ourselves we never could : the least of those difficulties would upset us for ever. But God can, by a little change in the frame of our minds, make all these things very easy. A deeper sense of himself, of the evil of sin, of the misery of inward bondage to corruption, of the infinite value of his favour, and a life of holy intercourse with him, is that which he can soon give ; and, when he gives it, the crooked paths become straight, and rough ways plain. This central feeling of God and divine things is what the New Testament calls faith. “ By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king ; for he endured, as seeing him that is invisible.” And salvation (that is, all well-being of soul here and hereafter) is, evidently, of this faith ; for this faith produces love of what it so discovers ; and the love of God is itself salvation. But “ it is of faith, that it may be of grace ;” that is, that it may be as gratuitous, as extensively communicated, and as promptly obtained, as, in the nature of things, is possible : for, where salvation is made to grow out of one parent grace, all that remains for us is to seek, daily and hourly, that grace of faith from Him who has said, “ Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.”

In thus speaking, I am not talking at random : I have had every weakness and every temptation to struggle with which does not depend upon peculiar circumstances ; and here lay my advantage, — that I felt those evils were not to be overcome by piecemeal (I mean one by one, and by necessarily slow degrees) ; but that a deepened feeling

of heart religion, an increase of that faith which is "the substantiation of things hoped for, and the realisation of things not seen," would raise me above them all, at once. Every uneasy feeling, therefore, made me, and still makes me, turn inward to God in the closet of my heart, to entreat him to deepen the sense of himself; to shew me more than ever the evil of sin, so as to increase my hatred of it; the vanity of the world, so as to raise me quite above it; and the value and felicity of the loving-knowledge of himself, and of "Him whom He hath sent," so that my heart might ever say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" This deepening of Divine faith in the heart, I saw was every thing: and, therefore, for this inward and spiritual root and principle I have looked above all, knowing that God alone could work it in me; and that he had, in the covenant of grace, engaged to do it. I often thought, how shall I manage such a difficulty, or go on steadily in such a course? But I reflected, where will be the difficulty if God only alters the disposition? Let me not be solicitous what I am to do in such or such a case, or about the consequences which may arise, suppose conscience lead me to this or that: let me leave all that to God, asking only wisdom to see, and strength to do, what is right; and leaving both particulars and consequences to Him, whose touching of the heart can, at once, put all in tune, and make all intricacies and embarrassments disappear.

Such have been my feelings (often painfully and doubtingly) for years. But, I trust, I now find

I was right in my course; since, certainly, that very kind of ease which I once thought it delightful to fancy, but could not rationally hope that I should ever attain, has been wonderfully given to me. And, now, I sometimes wonder that such astonishing mercy should have fallen to the lot of such a worm as I. I see clearly it is the very mercy of the Gospel; the blessing which the Eternal Word took our flesh to procure for us, and to convey to us. I see it harmonise with every thing desirable in nature, every thing important and eventful in Providence, and every faculty and feeling (active or passive, intellectual, fanciful, or affectionate) in the human mind. And, above all, I see the whole explanation and developement of it in the Scripture: and (wonderful to think!) I trust I feel the efficacy of it every hour in my heart. Thus, the whole outward scheme of things appears to me to be that to Christianity which the body is to the soul or spirit of the individual. To each person it is, when given to him from on high, as a soul within his soul; overcoming the carnal life, and producing a divine and spiritual principle, which is not only life, but peace. And, in a grander way, it is working inwardly and invisibly in the great social mass of mankind (all providential action being subservient to it), until, by this mighty but unobserved working, the whole shall be leavened. To be within such a Divine scheme, and to make an humble part of it, is the chief end, the consummate glory, the only real life of man.

Haste, my worthy and kind friend, makes me rather rhapsodical. I have something to do which

almost presses ; but, since you are kind enough to tell me that my letters always do you good, and are so kindly solicitous about my health, I could not delay ; and I could not but be a little diffuse.

Always your faithful and affectionate Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO GEORGE SCHOALES, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

April 10, 1805.

* * * I have, just before I began this, been making an extract from a writer of the 12th century, who wrote a little thing which he denominated “ De Scalâ Claustrali,” which words you might possibly not discover at once to be, “ Of the Ladder of the Cloister.” “ This,” he says, “ consists of four gradations of ascent—reading, meditation, prayer, contemplation. Reading inquires after spiritual happiness ; meditation ascertains its nature, its importance to us, and our own utter inability to confer it on ourselves ; prayer then asks it from Him who alone can bestow it ; and, when our prayer is answered, contemplation exercises itself in the actual enjoyment of the blessing. These steps,” he observes, “ are few indeed ; but they are of immense comprehensiveness. The lowest of them rests on the earth ; but the highest penetrates to the heaven of heavens.” Soberly, I know no way of escaping “ the heart-aches, and the thousand natural shocks, that flesh is heir to,” but by getting as high up as possible on this ladder, which I think the old

Carthusian abbot (for such he was, Dupin says, though the tract is among the works of St. Bernard) has not ill described.

There is not in the patriarchal history a more impressive story than that favourite one of all young readers, "Jacob's Ladder." The forlorn pilgrim, in his accommodations for the night, presents to us the extreme of solitary destitution. But what a light rises in the darkness; what a transit from the lowest of human circumstances to a magnificence before which all earthly splendour fades into inanity! It was natural for the astonished Jacob to exclaim, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven." Doubtless, after this, poor and friendless, as, to human appearance, he still was, "he went on his way rejoicing." Now, what I have to say is, that whoever gets possession of the above-described ladder, which, happily, is not that only of the cloister ("neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem," &c.), and learns well how to use it, has in this the substance and essence of Jacob's ladder; and, at every stage of his pilgrimage through this world, has from this possession a real portion of that comfort and support, in his serious, settled reflections and feelings, which the patriarch felt in his ecstatic vision.

This, to mortal man, ought ever to be most interesting; but, in times like the present, when that period described by our Saviour seems almost to be approaching, when there shall be "on the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for

fear, and for looking after all those things which are coming upon the earth," it is, actually, the only refuge which, not only conscience, but reason, can for a moment put up with.

Most sincerely yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Monday, July 14, 1805.

I FEEL as if I were too dilatory in answering your last letter ; yet, from its reaching me late on Saturday night, I could not have written sooner. I am anxious that you should not make the attempt to have —— licensed,* until the point at issue about —— be first disposed of. As to his scruples, I must think them wholly unfounded. I have a pretty clear idea of what he means, and do not doubt the fact ; but his inference from it is quite erroneous. It is weakness in any good man to suppose that that must hurt him, which other good men have done without hurt. That the little dissipation of reading aloud in church should be felt unpleasant for a time, is highly likely ; but, is a necessary duty to be relinquished for this ? No, no : the cure is to be sought in another way. Let private, retired devotion be more cultivated, in order to make up for the deficiency in public. Then, indeed, the result will be good : for what can harm one, which stimulates to prayer ? In my judgment, public

* As parish clerk.

worship is, to a confirmed Christian, more a gratifying recreation than a direct means of grace. To be sure, it is in this way a means of grace, of a very effectual kind: but it becomes such by not being too much looked to as such; that is, by private exercises being much more relied on.

So deeply am I convinced of the importance of this last point, (I mean, of private rather than public means being made the sheet-anchor of the mind,) that I should be more ready to deem what — speaks of, an advantage, than an injury to him, taking it at the worst. For, if used by him as it should be, it will impel him to strengthen himself in that more interior way which casualties and little external changes cannot effect: and it shews him the necessity of doing so, in order to his real establishment in what is right. For, in all feelings of indevoutness, from an apparent cause not really unlawful or improper, the true source is to be looked for in ourselves; and corrected, not by a change of our circumstances, but by our own private and secret endeavours to get religion more deeply rooted in our hearts. I think very well of —, but we all have need to be made better; and whatever shews us that need, if not wrong in itself, is not to be shrunk from, but to be used as a beneficial probe and test of our real state of grace, or growth in it.

Give my cordial love to Mr. L.,

And believe me yours most entirely,

A. K.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTER TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Palace, Cashel, August 10.

* * * As to the Archbishop himself, he is a prodigy: his whole mind is directed to what is good; and, with more solid wisdom than falls to the lot of many, he combines the sweet simplicity of a child. In fact, the fertile soil seems scarcely more to drink in the rain from heaven than he drinks in every new ray of truth. I have often, as you know, had pleasure and comfort in talking to him; but never so much as now. I clearly feel that I have access, not only to his mind, but to his heart; and what on this earth can be more gratifying than to have access to such a heart?

Probably my stay will be protracted: at present, my movements are rather unsettled, but an unsettledness which has nothing in it uncomfortable; as, through the mercy of God, I seem enabled to carry peace along with me in all my movements. * * * What you say of yourself gives me deep pleasure; for, when the way to true happiness is found, there is no danger of ever after losing it. They that seem to lose, I conceive, have not truly found it. So that I so far agree (though on a very different principle) with the Calvinists, as to think that there is a kind of goodness from which, through God's grace, persons do not fall.

Farewell; God bless you!

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Palace, Cashel, Aug. 22, 1805.

I RECEIVED, with much pleasure, your kind and interesting letter : every part I drank in. I often am ready to believe that, if I judged myself as some other sincere persons do, I might possibly have something of the same reason for depression, for I am sure I have frequent attacks of coldness ; and, were I to judge from the moment, I might fear warmth was in absolute declension. But experience has taught me not to rely upon my own present feelings as a test ; since I have so uniformly found that, after such seasons, things get soon right again, and that it was, really, but a false alarm. I, therefore, am now come to that point, that, provided I feel no wrong temper, nor speak, nor act contrary to conscience, I bear a fit of insensibility quietly and tranquilly : and I often find that this ease respecting it tends to dispel it, while actual struggling against it might increase it. When, therefore, I cannot have right feelings, I endeavour to have right thoughts, and to turn my mind toward God, whether with or without warmth. I cannot tell you what benefit I appear to myself to have derived from this simple course. By finding its efficacy, I have become much less afraid of temptation ; for I find I can escape by this quiet mental exercise, when I might fear that I had little or no power of resistance. I write this merely to acknowledge and thank you for yours, as I have unusual avocations.

I am here a month this day ; how much longer I may stay will depend on circumstances. But, some time in the next month, if you should be at home, I hope for the pleasure of seeing you and my kind and much-valued friend, Mr. L., in your own house.

Always, my dear Madam, with cordial attachment,

Your affectionate and faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR MISS FERGUSSON,

New Ross, Oct. 22, 1805.

I HAVE wished, day after day, to write, but I am so little master of my time that I cannot do as I wish. I feel real satisfaction in the prospect of returning home ; and yet, I must say, that no one could have made a more delightful excursion than I have done altogether. May I never entertain a thought unsuitable to the wonderful kindness which God has shewn toward me in making me so acceptable to those I converse with ; and, I humbly trust, in some degree useful too. I really observe what passes, and reflect upon it with wonder. I certainly have an uncommon portion of the richest pleasures that earth can afford ; and yet I have this (I humbly hope) in consequence of having “ first sought the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” This, every day and hour evinces to me ; and it, altogether, makes my life a scene of wonders to me, when I think of what I once was, and what it has pleased God to make

me—as to ease of mind, self-possession, and self-enjoyment. You, I assure you, are a source (or rather subject, for God is so exclusively the source) of deep comfort to me. Your sentiments in your letters, your steadiness, your quiet enjoyment of yourself when you had nothing else in this world to enjoy, except retirement and the affection of your friend—these unite to gratify my mind; and, that you should think me the instrument of your increased happiness, is a most substantial addition. I trust your happiness will prove but the foretaste of a still more solid enjoyment of your own mind, even in this life; as well as of eternal felicity hereafter.

Farewell!

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 27, 1805.

I THANK you most cordially for your kind and acceptable letter; than which, I assure you, I have not had often a greater gratification. If I could have hesitated about accompanying you to Bellevûe on your return, some things you have said would set aside every demur. So that, if I am in travelling order, you may most surely command me.

Lancaster has talked of visiting you again, and of taking the Moor with him. I am not sure whether the latter extraordinary person has come

in your way ; if not, I promise you, you will be pleased with him. He is one of the most interesting creatures I ever saw. He loves to talk, and talks most pleasantly ; describes Morocco manners, and his own adventures—his travels in Africa, and his impressions on coming to England, with great liveliness and acuteness, and an exquisite *naïveté*, peculiarly his own. In short, we were all highly pleased with him, and could hardly have been more amusingly interested.

After hearing him talk pretty largely, we got into conversation of somewhat a different kind with Lancaster ; and, if I were very anxious to convince some of my Association friends that I am no fanatic, I might have wished them to have been present. A man of colour is fair among jet-black negroes ; and I should have appeared most rational, even to—— and ——, when talking to Lancaster. I am rational, begging their pardons, at all times ; but those who cannot judge of a thing viewed by itself, may obtain a clear idea of it by the aid of contrast.

Our conversation was about the influences of the Spirit of God. He described them as actual impressions, to be felt, not merely in their effects, but in themselves ; to be perceived at the moment, and distinguished by self-evidence. For instance, he declared himself to be peculiarly affected that very evening—nay, from his entering the house. He had anticipated no such conversation as he was then engaged in ; yet there was an extraordinary preparedness for it, which he attributed to the actual operation of God's Holy Spirit.

I answered, that I was far from asserting that there [are] no extraordinary impressions or influences on the mind; that, besides what might be brought from Holy Writ, I could myself adduce instances from the most venerable antiquity to evince that Divine Goodness had acted in that way, on certain occasions—consequently, we could not deny the absolute possibility in any instance; and that, for my own part, I could easily believe that the good God would graciously condescend to permit things of that kind to occur—usually where peculiar habits or prejudices might leave room for persons being benefited in that way only. I could form an idea of this, without supposing any thing strictly miraculous. But I added, that, in my judgment, such impressions were far from being generally necessary; that the influences of the Divine Spirit were to be discovered in a way much more congruous to the usual actings of the mind; and, consequently, in a manner much more capable of mingling with the common course of life. For example, said I; if we find ourselves now loving, above all things, what once we were most averse from; if we find that those thoughts, and those mental exercises, which were once an intolerable drudgery, are now our refreshment and our luxury; and that love of the world, in all its shapes and forms,—love, whether of greatness, opulence, or pleasure—has absolutely and substantially fallen before a nobler taste, a Divine love, which now forms our master affection,—need we look beyond this? Or can any fluctuating, variable impulses, however pleasant or plausible, give

the same solid, sober satisfaction as the change I speak of, whether that change commenced on some sensible occasion, or grew imperceptibly like the light of the morning?

Besides (I observed), there is, in this plan of direct impression, an implied necessity of ebbing and flowing. Mr. Lancaster, for example, talked of being in a remarkably solemn frame that evening: if so, it followed that he was, comparatively, not such at other times. This, with all deference, I could not admire. I loved equability; a something which will not come and go, but abide with us, keeping us ever right, making us ever pleasant and happy. As I had said, I disputed not what might be with him, and such as he; but I must like that system better, which, from its rationality and evenness, would mix better with common life, and accompany us through the streets and in our various businesses and occupations. You, said I, on your system, are not to pray till you feel some impulsive movement. On our plan, we are led to pray by our rational sense of weakness and want, and by the direction of our own understanding and conscience. And what shews we are not in error is, that, in such endeavours, the mind rises; and the feelings, dull at first, become animated and affectionate. But I must stop; my paper and the hour only leaving it in my power to declare myself

Ever faithfully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY KIND FRIEND,

Saturday.

* * * There are a great many things in life which may be quite proper to be done, if they come spontaneously, and, as it were, offer themselves ; but, if we wish to preserve an easy and independent mind, we must not go to look for such things : and, even when they seem to be approaching us, if they afterward look aside and would shun us, I conceive it safest and most tranquil, as much as possible, to take the hint and let them pass. By doing so, I imagine, in small as well as great things, we may escape much uneasiness, and acquire, more and more, that entire self-command of which it is hard to say whether it more increases safety or enjoyment. * * *

When I shall again have the pleasure of seeing you at Bellevûe, I cannot, at this moment, say. But this I do know, that my heart will visit you daily, and be, I trust, daily solicitous for your true happiness. Probably I may not be able to visit you until I endeavour to conduct Mr. Butterworth ; but, when I get again on horseback, I shall be led toward you as frequently as I shall think consistent with proper self-denial, which I must always be attentive to, if I wish really to enjoy your most valued society. For what could I enjoy, or what pleasure could I occasion, if I were not a sincere and humble Christian in some substantial measure ? Truly, the longer I live, and the more I see into human nature, the more I am

convinced that this alone is both flower and fruit ; and we are wretched, and too often (always more or less) poisonous weeds without it.

Believe me ever your faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Aug. 15, 1806.

* * * We had another day of skirmishing on Thursday, when — at length withdrew his motion about laymen, but without shewing any disposition to flinch from the combat about the book ; so that what we may be able to do on Thursday cannot be ascertained till the event determines it. I state with pleasure, that — behaved exceedingly well. I had said some things bordering on severity, thinking deeply that the case warranted the calling things by their own names ; but, seeing how he acted yesterday, I made him a sincere apology for whatever I had said of an unpleasant kind, during the conflict. I do not despair ; neither will I triumph. “ Let not him (said the wonderfully temperate King of Syria) who putteth on his harness, boast as though he put it off.” The Bishop of — came there yesterday at my desire, and spoke strongly and well on our side. He’ll also attend on Thursday, and, I dare say, will speak with effect.

I am more and more satisfied that the cry against fanaticism and mysticism is neither more

nor less than a protest against the entire supremacy of religion in our hearts. To pursue religion, as one of the businesses of life, will be allowed ; but to cultivate it as the chief and central pleasure of life, is what no Christian Jew understands ; and what, therefore, both his reason and his self-love bind him to reject as inadmissible. At present, things go on, with such, tolerably well, by a wise distribution (as they suppose it) of their time between worldly business, worldly amusements, and their religious duties ; and they can submit to their duty, because they have their amusement along with it. But to insist that religion should be their pleasure, or that nothing should be an amusement to them with which devotion could not mingle itself, is to abolish their present pleasant system, and rob them at once of comfort for this world and that to come. Here, therefore, is the point about which they will combat while they have the shadow of an argument ; and what they cannot effect this way, they will supply by calling names. But I, for my own part, am satisfied to take my portion of their scorn ; being as sure as reason and experience can make me, that I am right, and that they are wrong. They would own, themselves, that if there were such a thing as a man's chief duty becoming his chief delight, it would be, of all states on earth, the most desirable : but they assume that this cannot be ; and they are provoked at any one who would maintain the contrary ; because, if such an one be right, what is to become of them ? This is a tremendous thought ; and, therefore, at all events, to be kept at a dis-

tance ; and those who would excite it are to be silenced as much as possible.

Am I too severe in all this ? or may not something like this proceed from a more innocent cause ? I will not deny that sometimes it may ; but, I fear, the supposition I have been making is the most usually realised.

Believe me always, most faithfully and affectionately,

Yours and Mr. L.'s,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
THOMAS STEDMAN.

MY WORTHY FRIEND,

March, 1806.

* * * Did I point out to you for your perusal the two reviews of Ely Bates' "Rural Philosophy," and of H. M.'s "Hints," in the *Eclectic Review*, as of my handy-work ? I am now urged to do another thing of the kind, which I think I must not refuse : I mean, the review of another publication of Ely Bates, which appeared in a former edition, but is now enlarged, and entitled, "Christian Politics." If I abstractedly followed my own inclination, I should refuse ; but strong reasons weigh with me in favour of compliance—which have, in fact, decided me.

The truth is, those *Eclectic* men are Dissenters chiefly, and also what is called evangelical. Now I am a Churchman in grain : not a Tory Churchman, for that is a disease in the Church, not its constitutional turn ; nor yet a Whig Churchman,

for they did not value enough the distinguishing features of our Establishment. But, if I may use the term, I am a primitive Churchman ; prizing in our system, most cordially, what it has retained from Christian antiquity, as well as what it has gained from the good sense of the Reformers in expurgating it from later abuses. But the truth is, I am not one whit puritanic : I love Episcopacy, the surplice, festivals, the communion table set altar-wise, antiphonal devotions, *i. e.* versicle and response ; and I am somewhat un-puritanic in doctrine too,—being much more engaged by the sublime piety of St. Chrysostom, than by the devotional dogmas of St. Austin or any of his followers. All this together, therefore, gives a certain character to my writing, which makes it greatly to differ from most of their probable assistants. Yet that difference is, in me, just as much a matter of deliberate judgment as of instinctive taste ; so much so, that I wish scarcely any thing more sincerely than that many others would come forward in the same line in which I endeavour to advance, with greater powers of pursuing it than I. While, however, this is not yet the case, and so long as such persons do desire my co-operation, I think the opportunity of leavening them a little, if it be possible, is not to be neglected. On this principle, therefore, I comply with their wish. You may be sure I take care not to say what could offend ; but a great deal may always be said inoffensively.

In truth, I am, just now, greatly impressed with the circumstances of the religious world, as I

cannot but think that it presents a view quite peculiar to the present times. Public events serve to keep up the sense of religion; yet suitable means for exercising and nourishing this feeling (which means it instinctively looks for) are rarely to be found, except among the Dissenters or Calvinist clergymen: which latter are in such double fetters, between their theological dogmas and a certain Church punctiliousness, that they do not seem to take with the multitude in the same degree as absolute Dissenters. Yet, as far as I can judge, the Dissenters themselves are but indifferently qualified, just now, for discharging so high a function as that of directing the pious feeling of the public. I see they are getting looser than heretofore from Calvinistic trammels; but I do not perceive that they are getting any other system in its stead. They are becoming more learned, more classical and scientific, more refined in taste, and more intent upon recommending themselves to improved and discerning minds; all which tends, in my mind, to disengage them more and more from Calvinian orthodoxy: and, as they have never had any regular set of principles independent of Calvinism, I fear, if no such set of principles can be brought to have footing among them, were public events to grow less alarming, this increased influence of Dissenters might lead, in the next generation, to an increased growth of Socinianism, or infidelity.

Now, for all this I know but one remedy; and to this, as far as my weak power goes, I would wish to draw attention. I think a more clear,

definite, unprejudiced view of the plan of Christianity, as given in the Scriptures themselves, than has yet been generally come at, is the desideratum. Hardly ever, perhaps, yet, except in the case of solitary individuals, has the Scripture been fairly consulted for its own sense. The mind of man naturally demanding theories for its imagination, as well as substantial objects for its heart, and not seeming to itself to find as ready-made a provision in the New Testament for the former, as for the latter, has, I conceive, successively gone to work for itself; and, catching at a few hints furnished by scriptural metaphors or scriptural illustrations, it has imagined vast trains of consequences; and, after exercising some ingenuity of arrangement, has adopted the whole as the very divinity taught by the Scripture. In this way both Popery and Calvinism have severally propped themselves; and I conceive their doing so may have had great temporary use: but, as both are, probably, now failing, something better than either seems to be clearly called for.

What I would humbly wish to make felt is, that the object of the Gospel is not to subdue our understandings to the reception of abstract propositions, or intricate dogmas, of whatever kind, but to possess our hearts with penetrating, vital facts; the due impression of which is religion, let a man theorise upon them ever so little. The purpose of those facts being presented to us, is, however, left too plain, and made too striking, for any thing to add new light to it. "The end of the commandment is love." "Neither circum-

cision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ; but *ἡ καινὴ κτίσις*.” “ There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that through them we might become partakers of the Divine nature.” And, above all, our Saviour’s own words — “ Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” These are the great immediate ends of Christianity ; and these alone lead to the remote ends — eternal glory, and God’s perfect complacency in his handiwork. Now, of these, I conceive, the infinite importance is too little felt. A set of theories, or, rather, one complicate theory, made up, as I said, from human ingenuity working on a few metaphors and illustrations of Scripture, has too much supplanted the inward and solid religion of which I have been speaking ; not merely as the one has been dwelt upon to the comparative depreciation of the other, but really, I think, inasmuch as the doctrinal scheme implies an actual comparative drawing away of the mind and heart from the pursuit of what is to be felt and attained to in the way of actual experience. The change which the above Scriptures describe, has, I conceive, nothing to do with any subtlety of opinion ; and may even be substantially retarded or checked (nay, must be) by a taste for such subtlety prevailing. A common-sense apprehension, and a divinely wrought impression, of the facts of the Old and New Testament is that, and that only, which initiates us into, or keeps us in, the present kingdom of God. As this becomes stronger or weaker, our Christianity rises or sinks ; for to be inwardly, spiritually,

divinely impressed, with God, the Creator and Governor of all things, as manifested in the Old Testament; and with God the Saviour (the Saviour not from political disfranchisement, or forensic condemnation, on penal infliction, merely or chiefly, but from an inward hell, an eternal death in the centre of the heart—a Saviour to bring us back to God, not by removing obstacles on God's part, except what in this way his moral government might have made expedient, but by subduing our corruptions and attracting our hearts), as set before us in the New, is, in its necessary results, to love the great God and Father of all; and to love God, as manifested in Scripture, especially and eminently as manifested to us in the person of the Divine Emmanuel, is, summarily, to love all and every thing that can exalt, felicitate, or adorn, a rational nature.

Now, I conceive the great object should be, at this day, to draw religiously disposed people from doctrinal theories to this matter-of-fact simplicity, and solidly Divine spirituality, of religion. And, in proportion as they are drawn to it, I think they will come to see that the particular theory they have valued so much is the result of human fancy; that the righteousness of God, spoken of by St. Paul and by our Saviour, is the Divine plan, not of rating men as righteous by imputation, but of making them righteous by a new creation; and that, in this view, there is provision made for a high and heavenly walk on this earth, a rising above all painful struggling, a “being rooted and grounded in love,” &c. (Ephes. iii. 17, &c.); of

which doctrinal people seem to have scarcely an idea. In proportion, then, as well-disposed people are brought to this, they will get out of those variable winds of doctrine which have hitherto been tossing the ship of the Church; and they will pass into a sort of Pacific Ocean of truth.

I must have done. My kindest wishes ever wait upon you and yours.

I am, my kind Friend,
Always most faithfully and cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS ———.

MY DEAR MISS ———,

May 24, 1806.

* * * About your dancing, you know my sentiments: I believe it is as innocent as it can be in any human being, and I am far from presuming to insinuate that you do in this respect what is positively wrong for *you*. And did it rest with me to say what you ought to do, I could not say, "Never dance more;" but I most surely wish you, at no great distance of time, to acquire such a tranquillity and elevation of mind, as well as such a tender and delicate apprehension of all appearance of evil, as to determine you to avoid such amusements and such intercourse, from taste no less than from conscience. I have long thought that Beattie's picture of the young Edwin shunning such scenes from pure poetry of soul, has something in it as beautiful as it is just: and, doubtless, pure poetry and vital piety are wonderfully akin

to each other. "Religion," says the ingenious Mrs. Barbauld, "may likewise be considered as a taste, an affair of sentiment and feeling; and in this sense it is properly called devotion. Its seat is in the imagination and the passions; and it has its source in that relish for the sublime, the vast, and the beautiful, by which we taste the charms of poetry and other compositions which address our finer feelings." In this, I am convinced, there is most substantial truth; and, therefore, I do think that wherever this taste prevails, it will shew itself in instances not much unlike what Beattie has described:—

" Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were joined,
Edwin, of melody, age held in thrall
From the rude gambol far remote, reclined,
Soothed with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Oh! then all jollity seemed noise and folly
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined.
Ah! what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compared of heavenly melan-
choly?"

I need not tell you that melancholy here means only pensiveness. But I must, for the present, have done, quoting only a few lines from Young, which, possibly, I shall make nonsense of, by falling asleep nearly while I am writing; for it is now past one in the morning; and as I return early to Bellevûe, I must finish before I go to bed.

" Were all men happy, revellings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly blest,

But it composed, and gave him such a cast,
As folly might mistake for want of joy."

I add, in plain prose, that I am

Your most faithful and affectionate

Friend and Servant,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

August 15, 1806.

* * * This night we had a long talk on this subject. "Is it the thinking on the atonement or death of Christ, or is it the actual experience of the living power of Christ, by which our hearts are to be excited to love and gratitude?" Archdeacon — led me into the conversation by his laying great stress upon the former, which I, as you may suppose, did not agree with him in. I, of course, allowed the Divine efficacy of our Saviour's atonement; but could not conceive how the distinct and continual adverting to this was either profitable or natural. I said, if we lived with a friend who had once saved us from drowning, and who still protected and supported us, it would be the present every-day kindnesses, rather than the one great kindness, which would feed the flame of love: and I could not but think that, in like manner, if we now could say with David, "The Lord is my shepherd," &c., it would be our present intercourse with him, rather than any general blessing (however great) formerly conferred, which would be

the source of our loves. I did not wonder at —— not liking such talk ; but —— not agreeing with me was more than I had reckoned on. I almost think I feel this the more, because he is so very amiable. His temper seems excellent ; and his acquiescence in the will of Providence, respecting his present great affliction, exactly what it should be. Yet how can I separate the sentiments I speak of, from the idea of interior deficiency ? I see not how : but, assuredly, I may be wrong. My suspicion, however, is, that the feeling system, which I thought he had adopted last year, has, some way or other, faded from his mind ; and that he has adopted a thinking system instead of it. I mean, that, in a way of his own, he has (like many others) become inclined to put views in the place of actual experience ; finding it easier to look at what was done by our Saviour on the cross, than to look for such inward effects of that great transaction as would imply realisation, rather than recollection.

Outward sin the worthy man has, long since, cast far from him ; and inward sin, I dare say, he hates, and strives against, and hopes more and more to conquer. But there is an inward hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a vivid tenderness of conscience, and an habitual sense of Divine and eternal things, which lead the mind to constant self-attention, to unremitting watchfulness, and to hourly prayer ; and which, though apparently difficult, and, in the view of many, unattainable, I conceive to be the only true state of ease and liberty. This state I do not think our friend has sufficiently in his view. If he wished for it during

a season of first warmth, it seems as if it were not now so strongly aspired to; and to this cause, coupled with an argumentative spirit, I chiefly ascribe what I have been adverting to. All this is a deep secret.

I could say many things; but I must, for the present, conclude. It is now not Saturday night, but Sunday morning. My cordial love to Mr. L.

I am, my dear Madam, most truly and faithfully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P.S. * * How strange is it that any one who reads the Scripture can mistake its meaning respecting the way of salvation, or the best means of walking in that way! What can go beyond that simple position, that, "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature?" and, also, that "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace?" And what is this but a living in the view, and under the sense, of things Divine and eternal; so as habitually and supremely to hunger and thirst after inward righteousness — the mind and spirit which were in Christ? Our having this, and the steady, consistent acting upon it, and cherishing it by prayer and watchfulness, seems to me the essence of practical religion. What, then, but this need we be anxious about? Where this is, it will soon become matter of comfortable experience; the exercise of this disposition will be attended with sweet fruits; the reality of the spiritual temper will evince itself by the con-

sciousness of pure and holy tastes and feelings ; and an indescribable knowledge of God and the Redeemer will gradually grow up, and become confirmed within us, in consequence of increasing effects which God only could produce. We shall feel that there is an invisible and eternal world, from the habitual attractions of it overcoming in us the attractions of the visible world ; and, from the uniformity, the certainty, the efficacy, the solid rationality of all that is thus effected in us, we shall recognise the all-glorious Author, and come, as it were, into a degree of mental contact with Deity, and a sublime and blessed acquaintance and friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ. This, I think, is Christianity ; and I know it to be that which would infinitely outweigh all that ever was enjoyed from this world, if all earthly pleasures, from the foundation of this terrestrial system, were to be concentrated, and the essence of them all possessed by some one person. True, I cannot judge of the literal case I am supposing : but we know the nature and kind of all that the world has to confer ; and, surely, the most painful things in true religion are infinitely pleasanter than the most pleasurable things that man, not religious, is capable of enjoying.

I am a weak creature ; and, I think, even weaker than I used to be. I am subject to great mental dryness and dulness : yet, in the midst of all my little uneasinesses, just what I have described is, in a low degree, my support and comfort : and I should be the arrantest of fools, if I desired any thing but more of this unspeakable

blessedness. I think if my friend here saw this in the light I see it in, he would have no difference of any moment with me. And deeply satisfied I am, till he does see the business in this light, let his sincerity in religion be what it may, it will not make him happy. May this be your religion more and more, my dear madam, till you are fitted for a better world!

Most truly yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Feb. 21, 1807.

* * * Dr. Arbuthnot used to say of Sir Samuel Garth, that if ever man was a Christian without knowing it, he was. I am ready to say, that, if ever man had principles sounder, far sounder, than his own ideas of them, — is that person. That he thinks very erroneously, I am sure: but that he feels wrong, is, I hope, a very different matter. Yet I do not mean by that, that he feels quite like a Christian. Christianity implies a fixed friendship, a blessed familiarity with the only true God, and Him whom He hath sent, that our friend seems to think unreal. It implies an actual experience of such influences and attractions, as worldly minds have no idea of, and which spiritual minds know to be of a nature distinct from every thing they could do for themselves. And, though they are not often disappointed in their cordial endeavours to obtain some degree at least of these

divine drawings ; yet still they fail sufficiently to assure them that there are laws in the case, which operate independently of the mere will of man ; and that, in the strictest sense, they are not sufficient of themselves even to think as of themselves ; but that their sufficiency is of God.

It strikes me, that where these things are not apprehended, there is some want of tenderness of conscience. There may be the nicest sense of what we owe to our fellow men ; and yet there may not be a due impression of that profound saying, " Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." There is a spiritual discernment of God, which shews depths of subtle evil, not before discovered ; and which would not be attended to, nor regarded as evil at all, if we did not feel a certain intercourse with God to be essential to our happiness ; with which intercourse, those evils are felt to be incompatible. When these deep and subtle evils, then, are detected, our own inability to expel or overcome them will be also manifest. This will lead to earnest prayer for deliverance from them ; which deliverance, again, we naturally look for through a deeper and more influential sense of divine things. And, being deeply interested, and closely attentive, when such a sense grows, and in proportion as it grows in us, we mark the difference, and feel with delightful satisfaction, that what we cannot do for ourselves, God does for us ; and that imploring his aid is not a fruitless resource. Thus tribulation, of a spiritual as well as temporal kind, " worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope."

My kindest wishes visit you and Mr. La Touche every day of my life.

Always yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevûe, April 23d, 1807.

Half-past Eleven.

THE reason why you got only lines from me was, that I was still busy writing to Mr. Wilberforce. I have only folded it up within this half-hour. Ten sheets! What he will think of it I cannot anticipate; but I own my heart was greatly in it. And, now it is so far done, I am right glad I have written it. This, and not neglect, kept me from writing to you. Trains of thought took possession of my mind, and then I was solicitous to put them on paper: in which state of mind, one becomes a truant (almost irresistibly) to every thing else. I believe you will feel all this, and make allowance for me.

Your accounts of the sermon entertained me; and I liked much what you said on the subject. I am amazed at people's talking of doing good in company: when they first begin to talk solid connected sense in company, then next it may be expected that some good will be done. But I cannot imagine that nonsense and unconnected chit-chat can do good to any one. And, beyond these, how seldom does the conversation of either a mixed or a numerous company advance? I must say, it is not religion alone that makes me shun

company: it is, also, that my intellect may not be suspended. I love good sense; I love conversation; but company, so called, is the grave of conversation, and common talk its winding sheet. They who spend many of their evenings in common companies, or any in them from pure choice, have, I think, a poor mental taste: to urge nothing about the immortal spirit; to which such a method of life administers slow poison.

Most cordially and entirely yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dawson Street, Sept. 5, 1807.

WERE I to follow the first motion of my heart, I should be with you on the day you mention. But after consideration has compelled me to put it off a little longer. I love —— well. But I say to you, that to talk pleasantly to him requires that circumstances respecting himself should be in tune. When he seeks me, I am pretty certain of that being the case. But, except in that case (always indeed most gratifying), I do not promise myself much pleasure from being in his company. I say pleasure, because really I have none in dull, mawkish sittings-together of human beings. I do feel myself so much an immortal spirit, that I wish to live as like one here as I can; and I seldom feel myself more unlike one, than when I can neither think aloud nor silently: not the last, because there are sufficient living objects before me to produce ex-

citement ; not the first, because those living objects are not alive enough to think along with me.

I hope there is no impudence in this : I am sure I mean none. I even persuade myself that such epicurism as I have been avowing (which is, I conceive, the epicurism of that taste which we are born to cultivate) would tend powerfully to correct society. For, were it understood that there were qualifications for intercourse, and were it farther known that no one need wholly want these if he took the proper method of acquiring them, it seems to be likely that the state of things would mend apace. But how is this ever to be discovered, if some individuals have not the courage, either directly or indirectly, to declare that they deem a score of people assembled in a drawing room, without any attempt to contribute to one another's rational pleasure or moral improvement, a set of self-made simpletons. Positively, if I thought the thing incurable, out of downright good-nature I should hold my tongue. But, because I think things may, by proper management, be placed (gradually, I fully allow) on a better footing, I allow myself to speak out to such an honest friend as I am now writing to.

When my letter is fit to be read, I adhere to my purpose of going to Bellevûe to read it to you. But I am so desirous to finish it, that I most certainly wish to sit just here till it is completed.

Believe me always yours and Mr. La Touche's
ever faithful and affectionate

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Oct. 3, 1807.

WE left ——, pleased with every thing that occurred there, except a somewhat over-polemical turn in —— . He seemed to think himself bound in conscience to put forth the most rigid features of his doctrines ; and I was utterly unable to draw him into any pleasant or useful conversation. I was consoled with the thought, that such a display would not be wholly without its use to Mrs. La Touche ; who had never seen before so complete an exhibition of Calvinism.

In addition to the ladies of ——'s family, we had a Miss ——, a disciple of ——'s, but a most excellent creature ; little cultivated as to manners, and disposed, by the make of her person, to masculine movements ; yet so honest, so simple, so cordial, and, above all, so decidedly religious, that I felt myself take to her greatly. I had actually an ambition to gain her good opinion ; and I hope I did not fail in my attempt.

We are here very pleasant and comfortable. Lady Lucy is kindness itself ; and the Colonel scarcely less so. We stay till Tuesday : on which night we expect to sleep at Bellevûe. This is a very charming place ; the walks being finer than any thing I ever saw within the same compass ; for mere local circumstances, it would nearly rival Bellevûe with me. But I can admire and be pleased with local pleasantness, without being captivated by it. The truth is, the state of mind is, in my

view, so much, that I think less of other things: though, while we are in this earthly tabernacle, there are some things we must think of. These, however, I find everywhere; but at no place more substantially than at home.

There I hope to be before the ensuing week closes: in the meantime

Believe me ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Cashel, Dec. 9, 1807.

YOUR letter of Saturday* reached me this morning. I sincerely thank you for writing it, as it has preserved me from the possibility of being distressed by any erroneous or exaggerated statement. I rejoice that matters are no worse: and yet I could not but feel shocked while I read your letter. What a tremendous difference might have been made by a slight alteration of circumstances! as you say, by its having occurred an hour later. Mr. La Touche's composure, and his tranquil sleep after such an alarm, gave me a fresh evidence of his having in him a principle of rectitude which will never be extinguished; and which may, even in this world, yield a satisfaction to himself, of which he has not yet an adequate conception: a satisfaction, which a far more awful scene, that awaits him and us all, will not lessen, but enhance.

* Giving an account of a fire which destroyed part of the house of Bellevue, whilst its inhabitants were residing there.

I should think some such benefit to him, and still deeper instruction to you, may be the end of Providence in two* such uncommon hazards and escapes: though I make this observation with hesitancy; feeling how incompetent I am to be an interpreter of such dispensations. Yet, if not a sparrow falleth without God's knowledge, such events as those can scarcely have occurred without design. One might suppose this of either, singly; but it is hardly possible to avoid such an inference from both coming so strangely together. Yet who, as I say, can explain in such a case? I know but one method; and that is, to implore Him who is the teacher as well as the searcher of hearts, to make us know his entire will respecting us, and to dispose our hearts unreservedly to follow it.

And yet, I cannot but think that, in any such case, the mystery much more lies in what Divine goodness would free us from, than in what He would draw us to. For, in this latter, he that runneth may read. The methods in which we may go wrong, are innumerable; that in which we can be right, is but one. But, there may be also a mode of proceeding not positively wrong,—that is, not criminal,—but rather less right; from which the Divine Shepherd would wish to raise, to a more excellent way, those whom He specially loves: for, that He does love some specially, we may infer from his conduct on this earth. For example, “Jesus loved Martha,” as well as “her

* The other was an escape from a sudden and excessive fall of snow, in which one of the servants attending Mr. La Touche's carriage perished, in the preceding November.

sister and Lazarus." And, because He loved Martha, He wished to make her like Mary. Instead of being "careful, and troubled about many things," he was earnest she should feel that "one thing was needful." Not that she was actually insensible to it, but that she was rather not enough impressed with it. And, obviously, what our Lord wished to bring her to was, what St. Paul afterward expressed, with evident allusion to this very part of the Gospel history, "that ye may wait upon the Lord without distraction."

Doubtless, this is the grand object to which all the movements of Providence point. "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on Thee." And, most surely, it is not by relinquishing other lawful or necessary objects that this is generally to be attained; but by gaining an ascendancy over them, and a command of one's mind in the midst of them; by virtue of which, we can turn to them and from them at our pleasure; and thus give neither more time nor thought to any thing than the doing it well actually requires; but, when we lay it down, may be able there to leave it until it be proper to return to it again.

This is a great power; but it is, essentially, contained in "waiting on the Lord without distraction." The one cannot be accomplished without the other. We must be distracted, if we have not this self-command. It is, I well know, the privilege of winged souls only. They that struggle along on the ground, must be tossed and jostled. But he who can fly, escapes all this; and moves forward unobstructed, and at his ease. I know

we cannot give ourselves these wings ; but God can ; and will, if we ask him with all our heart. Most surely, the person that flies is the true person of business ; for, to such a one, every spot below is seen at once ; and the mind can descend at its pleasure, and always hit the point it would be at, and then ascend again. May you and I have those wings, and keep them in happy exercise until we get still better !

My most cordial love always waits on you and Mr. L.

Believe me,
Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Cashel, Dec. 14, 1807.

I AM obliged to you for all your letters : and, at length, I can answer a question you have put more than once. I have heard both from Mr. Butterworth and from Hannah More. What Mr. B. thinks of my long letter, I cannot collect ; for he only tells me he has not yet time to remark on it. H. M.'s letter is lively, and like herself : and, with those parts of my letter about which I least cared, she seems much interested ; but, where I wished her to be attentive, she makes scarcely the shadow of an observation.

Were I one who rode on a hobby-horse, all this might disappoint me ; but it does not. Butterworth's slight mention is very consistent with his duly valuing what I have written. And, as to

H. M., I looked for little more. I may, however, yet bring her closer to the subject ; and, if I can, I think I will. Not for my gratification, but for the sake of the subject, and for her own sake. In simple truth, it is not on my theories (pleasant as they are) that I live for happiness. And, therefore, though they can act as a medium for conveying to me sensations of pleasure, they can hardly convey to me sensations of pain. But, in addition to this, I am pretty well satisfied about them : and I believe they will spread, whether from me, or from some other source, when I am in the dust. * * * *

I wrote to —— a sober kind of letter on the two escapes. I have no doubt of her taking it well : but I could wish it to produce effect. I have poor right, however, to give deep advice to any one ; for, though I am not wicked I hope, I am but weak in all good qualities. A very slight derangement of nerves serves to shew me how easily I might be perturbed. I have good confidence, however, that I shall be both guided and supported. But I hold no perfection that excludes weakness. In fact, I mean by that term, not a mind raised above temptation, but a heart freed from dividedness and deceitfulness ; so that, though there may be wandering in abundance from the point in hand, there is no wandering of heart from God ; no other settled idea of happiness or comfort is admitted into the mind ; St. John's direction is obeyed, " Little children, keep yourselves from idols." In a word, I believe only in a perfection of principle : " If thine eye be single, thy whole

body shall be full of light:" but, every possible degree of goodness here has still a higher degree above it; so, no immutable habit in this lower world.

I left Henry Woodward in the drawing-room with the Archbishop, while I came up to write this letter. I expect, now, to be soon called down to coffee; and therefore I will, for the present, with your good leave, only add, that I am

Always yours,

A. K.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO MISS FERGUSON.

Bellevûe, Epiphany, 1803.

* * * I have resolved not to move till next week; on some early day of which—most probably on Tuesday—I expect (please God) to be with you.

I never have been happier at Bellevûe than during this visit; and yet, I shall return home, I trust, with real comfort. It is the mind, not the place, which ensures the happiness. This can be added to, which is a gracious provision, and it might be impeded; but, surely, in this latter instance, the great Benefactor consults our weakness, and provides us with necessary comforts. How deeply have I found, and do I ever find this! And I have the pleasure of thinking that you find, and feel it, too.

Cashel, Jan. 14.

I shall be glad to be at home; and yet I am happy here. Never could I, on this earth, be in a

lovelier situation. And yet, I shall leave it cheerfully, as having been long enough happy in that way; and having, through the mercy of God, no fear of leaving my happiness any where behind me.

* * * * *

Mr. Jebb certainly improves in health, and in every thing else. I almost wonder what that man is, at length, to be; for he seems to me to be moving forward with a steady, gradual pace toward a more substantial, mental, and, perhaps, professional perfection, than I have yet seen exemplified. I witness his movements with heartfelt pleasure.

* * * * *

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dawson Street, Dec. 18, 1810.

I MAY truly say, I never wished more in my life to go to Bellevûe than I do at this present time. Yet, I have fears of changing my place, arising from the present indisposed state of my frame. It is, however, my resolution to resist those fears, and to go to you; probably before the end of this week. I thank God I have little to complain of; but that little makes a difference in me; which I feel, perhaps, more than you will see, except I should grow worse than I am.

I thank you for the communication of ——'s letter. I am pleased with it; for it is what it ought to be. But what he himself will eventually

become, I cannot conceive. How difficult it is to excite in another, or even for one's self to attain, directive dispositions! But, when these are fully attained, how do difficulties, once thought insuperable, vanish into nothing! The pure, unmixed desire to be right, is the main thing; then, guidance is never wanting. Truth has said it, and it must be; "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."

What a beautiful saying! so simple, and yet so pregnant! For, what beyond this could be said? when it is also told us that "God is light;" and that "if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with Him."

Adieu! my ever dear Mrs. L.

Believe me, more than I can express,

Yours and Mr. L.'s,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Begun in Dublin Dec. 20, 1809:
Interrupted by indisposition;
Finished at Bellevue Jan. 2, 1810.

I HAVE long wished to write to you; but I was solicitous to have something satisfactory to communicate to you about——. On that head, however, I am no wiser than when I returned from England.

* * * * *

One circumstance which has occurred, though in itself most unpleasant, may have an effect (when he is informed of it) of imposing quietness on him: I mean, the adoption of a clear dissenting principle, by the Irish Wesleyan Methodists. It is curious

how this has come about ; but, now I take it to be fixed - past recall. The apparent effects of this change will, probably, not be sudden ; but they must be certain. The Irish Methodists have, among them, one man who is in deacon's orders. His exercising the function which really belonged to him — that of baptising, — has long been a matter of convenience, as Presbyterians have been continually attaching themselves to the Methodists ; and their own ministers have been, little less uniformly, discarding them. Where such persons had infants needing baptism, their case involved a dilemma. Their ministers repelled them and their children ; and their scruples about sponsors and the sign of the cross held them back from our ministers. The deacon I speak of being an itinerant over the whole northern parts of the island, every now and then came within their reach, and relieved them by administering to their infants what is called private baptism. This might be a little irregular ; but it was not dissenterism.

Dissatisfied, however, with this humble occupation, the said deacon has determined to go further ; and, *ex mero motu*, to constitute himself a presbyter. In short, about a year since he began to administer the Lord's Supper : and the body of Methodist preachers, at their yearly conference last July, having fully heard the matter, were pleased to sanction Mr. A.'s proceedings. So that his violation of the established order, in its most central principle, is now the common act of the fraternity.

This occurrence has given me no surprise : it has only disappointed a very faint hope. I knew

well, the Irish Wesleyan Methodists had no steady principles. But, inferring, from this obvious fact, that Providence alone could have kept them in their subordinate state for fifteen years, in spite of the example of their brethren in England, I thought it possible that the same restraint upon them might, still, be continued. My hope of this, however, grew less and less, in proportion as I saw the Irish Methodists becoming more and more spiritless and formal. Principles of corruption were, self-evidently, extending themselves within; and tokens of morbidness must, at length, appear on the surface. That event has clearly come: and a fresh instance is, of course, added to the signs of the times.

But, among us in the British Isles, do not all the signs we discover in what is called the religious world, resolve themselves into one? and that, the very one which the English Wesleyan Methodists exhibited fifteen years ago, and the Irish Methodists are exhibiting at this present time? Is not want of fixed, steady principles, the almost universal disease? While pious sentiment spreads through individuals, and good habits are domestically formed, the misfortune of unsettled principles may lie concealed. But there can be no permanence, either in sentiment or habits, where solid, definite principles are wanting. These, once substantiated, may always be appealed to, because always producible. They are landmarks, without which men are and must be tossed, without remedy, by varying winds of doctrine. Nay, in the best and calmest time, sentiment is but as the wing of the

soul, on which it takes its successive flights. But, if it has not clear, definite principles, what shall it do when its wing is tired, and it seeks to alight to recruit its strength? Will it not, even with the best and warmest sentiment, be like Noah's dove, which found no rest for the sole of her foot?

Convinced I am, that it would be better for the individuals to retain false principles—when only theoretically false—(I mean when not incompatible with sincere goodness), than to remain without principles. Better, for example, to be still Roman Catholics, than remain versatile Protestants: better continue systematic Calvinists, than become amphibious nondescripts in divinity. Let a man embrace downright Calvinism, or downright Transubstantiation, and his mind, at least, gains rest. His wanderings are past; he is on land; or what, at least, is land to him. He has a conscious feeling of settledness; which, compared with the want of it, is mental luxury. But, how few of this day are so fixed in any thing as to experience this enjoyment? and how much fewer are such instances likely to become in the rising generation? in which, in the nature of things, there must be, without some extraordinary miraculous revulsion, less sentiment and more unsettledness.

Far be it from me to reflect on persons. Alas! what I complain of, I see in those whom I cannot think of but with cordial respect and love. Yes, I lament to see unfixedness, where nothing but fixedness is wanting to absolute excellence. You'll observe, by unfixedness I do not mean actual motion, but unrootedness; the want of that establishment

which bids defiance to varying winds of doctrine. And I mean, that this defect exists only in the single instance of fundamental principles. What goodness of head or heart can confer; what an extended and penetrating view of what is called the religious world can imply; what reading the Scripture conscientiously, along with the best modern comments, can attain: these, and such like ingredients of character, are, in the cases referred to, by no means wanting. But, what I have not found, and what I lament the want of, is a settled apprehension of comparative theology. I use this term for want of a better. I mean a clear, discriminative knowledge of what ought to lie lowest in the mind, as a support to every thing else. And, again, of what may conduce to well-being, but, nevertheless, might be parted with, consistently with substantial safety.

Next to the essence of piety, I cannot imagine any thing more important than the habit of mind which I am endeavouring to define. Without this faculty, it cannot be known how the mind may be most usefully exercised with respect to oneself; what subjects should be most earnestly dwelt upon with others; what elementary principles should be most diligently established in the minds of children: in fact, without this acquirement, there cannot be Christian wisdom; that wisdom which St. Paul spoke among them that were perfect.

Am I in error, when I complain of the want of this, in the present day? I think I am not. For, who is there, in what is deemed the religious world, that has yet looked for this wisdom where

alone it can be found? Is not this the self-evident method — to examine the authentic records of the lives of Christians in different ages; beginning, if you will, with our own, and proceeding upward from century to century, fixing on the fairest specimens in each period? And then, when fully satisfied of the fruits produced, to ascertain what they held in common? what equally pervaded them all? I must observe, that I do not mean by fruit, what they externally accomplished. The Angel of the Church of Ephesus had laboured, and had not fainted; and his last works were more than the first: yet, he had fallen from his first love. The fruit I speak of, is that of sentiment and temper toward God and toward man. It is a spiritual temper, and a heavenly mind: an habitual victory over the world; and a dying daily to all that is earthly, animal, devilish. The devil expelled; the animal subdued and managed; the earth used without being abused, and, sometimes, even enjoyed without contamination. I believe such cases must be searched for with attention; but, if searched for, they may be found. And, when brought together from the ancient church as well as from the modern, from the Greek church as well as from the Latin, from the unreformed as well as the reformed church; if only they are fairly questioned, their collective answer will tell us what the truths are which we should, above all other supposed truths, lay up in our hearts.

It would not be enough, I conceive, to find all good men within the reformed churches agreeing in certain propositions. If we find a greater

number of as good men, or, it may be, not seldom, better men, (not better than all, but than most modern good persons,) overlooking, or, perhaps, rejecting those identical propositions; have we not far more conclusive proof that such propositions are unessential, than that they are even true? The best of men may be deceived in the importance which they give to a positive point of belief; but that cannot be essential whose absence implies no diminution of real excellence.

Were such an investigation pursued to its extent, I persuade myself, much confirmation would be obtained in some matters of belief; and much doubt might possibly arise about others. I should be much mistaken if the deepest and most irrefragable proof would not be thus afforded of the infinite necessity of believing in the Triune God, of unalterably regarding the Word made flesh, as "very God of very God," and of looking for the grace of the Spirit, as the very omnipotence of God working upon us, and in us. I am bigot enough to believe, that where these views were not found, defects would be found. On the other hand, where these are really and fully found, (for, be it observed, that these few points contain a great deal,—I should think, all the facts of Christianity), it would, probably, be difficult to shew that any thing necessary to the formation of Christian excellence was wanting.

Were essentials once justly apprehended, deep advantages would follow. The mind, discharged from solicitude about supernumerary points, would have an undivided attention to give to matters of

real moment. These last would be better understood, more cordially loved, more firmly retained, more effectually communicated. The gold, the silver, and the costly stones, would form a more compact and surer fabric, both in the mind of the living individual and of the rising generation, when they had no weaker, or less lasting, material built in along with them. As matters are, who need wonder that what is built even with care as to the building, does not stand longer than the scaffolding keeps it up? We should not be surprised at the fall of a house, which, purporting to be built of stone, should then appear to have had, at least, as much soft wood as stone in its walls, and even in its foundations.

On the discriminative plan I speak of, all questions whatever respecting religion, would be likely to have a sounder termination than at present. The inner man has its own philosophy, as really and strictly as any other department of nature. And, other things being equal, he will cultivate his inner man best, who is most profoundly skilled in the philosophy that belongs to it. But no person can be thus skilled, without first distinctly knowing what are, and what are not, the grand operative principles. On this must depend both the faculty of exactly appreciating results, and of tracing the movements of the process: both which are indispensable to a thoroughly successful issue.

Without a clear apprehension of the theological scale, and the graduations marked upon it, not only much outward activity may be mispent, but

plans of Providence, even those that have been carried on from century to century, may be misconceived and undervalued. Institutions, invaluable with respect to true essentials, may be lightly esteemed, because they have no aptitude to other matters erroneously thought important. While, on the other hand, an overrating of non-essentials will, naturally, make those things which support them (men, books, or practices) be overrated also ; till, at length, a fallacy is discovered, and then, too probably, follows a rejection as indiscriminate as was the preference before. I conceive we have been long witnessing the first of these results, in the numberless secessions, within the last thirty or forty years, from the Establishment. And the latter result is too sure to occur, whenever reason is disposed to assume supreme authority, after its temporary displacement.

Is there any thing in all this ? If there be, a remedy is to be looked for : and what is that remedy ? I think, God himself has given it, through Jeremiah : I have said something like it already ; but, as it stands in the Prophet, it is decisive. “ Thus saith the Lord ; stand ye in the ways, and see ; and ask for the old paths, where is the good way ; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” What, then, are, with respect to us, the old paths ? Not, surely, those paths which are not yet three centuries old. Whatever there be, of this kind, is not old, but new. When fifteen centuries lie beyond, to be traversed, we must make our way into these, and rise high in them, before we can be sure of having what has

really stood the test of time. And when, in such a research, we find deep substantial agreement — even the darkest age not wholly without its luminaries, and the luminaries of all the successive ages uniting in one testimony to a few radical truths, and in one harmonious expression of that piety, purity, and charity, of which those truths, received in the love of them, were the seeds and elements, — than such catholicity, what, on this earth, can be more satisfying to the mind, or more influential on the heart ?

This, I venture to assert, is the true spirit of the Church of England. Had she intended to have made her children either Lutherans or Calvinists, she would have harmonised her formularies in conformity with such an object. But, in retaining the ancient forms with such scrupulous care, she has taught us to go, for further satisfaction, to the same quarter. This steady retention was, of all the acts of our Church, the most radical and solemn ; and, of course, the most characteristic. It tells us, therefore, that we are no further true members of the Church of England, than as we are, in the justest and strictest sense, Catholic ; that is, diligent inquirers after the united sense of the regular Christian church (in interpreting Holy Scripture), and steady adherents to what we thus find clearly avouched to us. This is what the Church of England took as its own leading principle, in subordination solely to the self-evident light of Scripture : and this it, consequently, enjoins on all its individual members.

I fear, by this time you will be tired of my talk :

and that you will either think me unintelligible, or making much ado about nothing. If such should be your feeling, I could not at once say to you, as I might to very many, "lay down my letter, and trouble yourself no more about it." I should rather beg a reconsideration; at the same time pointing your attention to other facts. Look, for example, how very generally the nonconformists in England, after the subsidence of Puritanic piety, became Arians or Socinians. Look, also, how the descendants of the German Pietists have diverged into semi-deism. And observe, how widely the leaven of false doctrine has diffused itself through the Calvinistic Church of Scotland. Attend, lastly, to the controversy at this day within the Church of England, about the meaning of the Thirty-nine Articles, and the obligation incurred by subscription. See, how some make absolutely nothing of this, or of them; turning the Articles into a dead letter, and assent and consent into a farce; while others would pin down subscribers to all the dogmas of a particular party. Does not this last fact prove us also unsettled? And do not the other facts give evidence of that in which unsettledness is likely to end?

Cast your eye, now, around you; and see who, even of your own worthy and excellent friends, are fully awake to this danger? As to themselves, I repeat my persuasion, that those of them who have acquired safe habits of thinking will remain through life substantially what they are. At least, I strongly hope this. But who of them is aware of the danger which awaits their children, grow-

ing up, evidently, with weaker habits, and, yet, clearly more disposed to face the temptations of the world? You yourself must know that this is no fanciful representation. Possibly, you might not find an instance in which the children of religious parents, with the world at command and under no circumstantial restraints, adhere fully (I will not say to the letter, but) to the spirit of their fathers' strictness. I am aware of a consolation against this declension, in other individuals coming in to supply the place of the deserters. But even this is a melancholy comfort; since domestic degeneracy must be anticipated in these instances also. And who, that weighs the entire case, can imagine that the fresh supplies, however numerous, will indemnify for the steady increase of such a species of irreligionists as the declension in view must inevitably occasion? I say, such a species; for there will, in all human probability, be such remains of moral decency among them, even after one or two generations, as to make them (if actual enemies to religion) the worst enemies it can have.

It is, then, against this evil that I propose a remedy: and simply say to all whom it concerns, (that is, I say so in imagination, in that little, yet ample world within, in which the most silent may be eloquent, and the most indolent may be active), If you wish to raise a permanent structure for yourself or your posterity, look well to the materials with which you are to build; and to the quarter from which you are to derive them. See that you collect those, and those only, which will stand the test; "gold, silver, costly stones:" not

“ wood, hay, or stubble.” And, as you have access to the best of all tests, whereby to try your materials, namely, time; as you can look up through eighteen centuries, and see what fabrics have stood firm, and what materials carry the stamp of master workmen, who, though dead, yet speak, and whose own “ works praise them in the gates : ” neglect not that means of instruction and confirmation; trust not to the uncertain sounds of scarcely three centuries, when you may listen to the concurrent voice of acknowledged wisdom and universal revered piety, through all the successive ages of the Catholic Church.

But it might be said, “ Is not this young Popery ? Do you mean to send us back from our own reformed religion to that imprisonment of mind which our forefathers suffered; by which truth was shut out, and even Scripture itself kept out of view ? ” I should reply, I mean nothing extreme, nothing irrational. It is, indeed, my strong persuasion, that, since the Reformation, and in flat contradiction to the leading principle of our Reformers, one pernicious extreme has been so shunned as to run into another little less pernicious ; and that, if imprisonment of mind was effected in the one case, incalculable vacillation of mind is, no less, produced in the other. Between these two extremes, I venture to assert there is a middle line of truth, which, if followed, will lead us, not to subjugation, but to perfect satisfaction, of mind. We shall find, if we inquire, that God never left himself without witnesses in the regular Hierarchical Church ; that even the grossest darkness of

Popery could not extinguish the light of Catholicity; that while many, apparently the greatest number, were idolising the world, and treading down the Holy City, a few were still, in spirit and temper, retiring inward to the mystically guarded temple: that is, were exemplifying holiness, and enjoying the sweet peace which it yields, even in the midst of surrounding desolations. But we need not rest in these later and lower lights (whose reality is more obvious than their brightness). As we advance upward, more vivid luminaries present themselves, whose magnitude cannot be overlooked, and whose rays no surrounding darkness could overcome. From Anselm and Bernard, in the twelfth century, up to the earliest Fathers, we may trace the unbroken succession, and hear the unvarying testimony. They maintain the same fundamental verities; they describe the same operations of Divine grace, in the mind and heart; they delineate the same purity, piety, and charity, in the temper and conduct; they draw the same line between the invisible Church and the world, insisting on the same inward crucifixion, the same abstinence from the appearance of evil, the same consecration of heart and life to the God of holiness: in a word, to the mind which becomes acquainted with them, and faithfully uses their guidance, they afford a light which diffuses new brightness over the page of Scripture; they give a fixedness, not to be affected by varying winds of doctrine; and, in a manner only to be known by experience, they deepen and consolidate that "peace which passeth all understanding."

A pupil of this school will scarcely ask, for the resolution of a doubt, what Mr. Whitfield, or Mr. Romaine, or Dr. Owen, or even Calvin or Luther, thought on the point? The great probability is, that he will not be troubled with doubts. But, should a doubt arise, he knows that a concurrent judgment is incomparably surer than a private opinion: and, therefore, where he is not authoritatively directed by "the Christian verity," he gladly listens to the voice of "the Catholic religion:"* that is, wherever he needs elucidation as to the former, he looks for it, with fullest confidence, from the latter. In this way, above all other ways, he finds that saying of the wise king fulfilled—"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd;"—not the Pope, my dear madam (whatever you may fear for me), but the great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ.

In points of practice, a follower of these guides will not be in danger of suspecting that his parents, or first instructors, were too methodistical. He is assured that the strictness which becomes a Christian, the self-jealousy which is necessary to his safety, is not the whim of any man or men, but that it has been the common instinct, as it were, of genuine Christianity, at all times and in all places; and that, if this be Methodism, all the pillars in God's house were Methodists. So far, therefore, as his parents were rationally strict and abstemious, he

* See the Athanasian Creed.

will be strict and abstemious also; not because they were so, but because, in this narrow path, and in this only, he sees clearly the footsteps of those who, in their several generations, have shined most luminously as lights in the world.

To him who has truly come to this "general assembly and Church of the first-born who are written in heaven," what are the maxims of an infatuated world, or the shifting sentiments of versatile men? He is initiated into a society whose solid greatness keeps him in countenance under all the scorns of men; whose deep unanimity establishes him amidst all the fluctuations of men; and whose wisdom guides him, in spite of all the jars and collisions of men. When he will, he can retire from the world and betake himself to that "multitude of counsellors," in which there is not only "safety," but consolation and satisfaction. And, thus enlightened and encouraged, he meets all the movements of the well-disposed or of the ill-disposed with equal firmness and equal tranquillity.

In addition to these advantages, one thing more may be stated with certainty: that, so far only as we attain this Catholicity of mind, can the exercises of our faith correspond to the model set by St. Paul, whether in his statements respecting himself, or in that noble exemplification which he has carried throughout the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews. He well knew that God's first manifestation of himself to Abraham was (had it stood alone) a sufficient ground for faith to rest upon. But he was no less assured, that every subsequent

example of faith gave both stronger satisfaction and clearer direction than could, in the nature of things, have been attained without it. Of this accumulated strength and ever advancing light, St. Paul rejoiced, himself, to make use ; the retrospect of the Jewish Church being, next to the prospect of the Christian Church, the dearest object to his mind. And what he practised, he has luminously taught in the chapter just referred to. It will be observed, that the instances of the power of faith, in this chapter, are, by no means, limited to Scripture history. They come down to times of which no canonical record was made ; and were, altogether, clearly intended to enable the faithful Christian to look upward through the series of past ages, and see, in them all, the same principle in operation, and the same results ensuing. The central object, infinitely glorious as it was in itself, became incomparably more impressive when viewed in connexion with "so great a cloud of witnesses." In such a contemplation, not merely faith was exercised, but reason became satisfied : things in themselves invisible, thus seen in their consecutive and harmonious effects, become substantiated, and as if embodied ; and those movements to which the mind is, of itself, the most prone, and in which it takes the most natural delight, when thus elicited, came, in fullest force, to befriend the highest interests of immortal man. I might support these remarks by appealing to the peculiar sublimity of sentiment and glow of language, which are manifest through the whole sequel of the Epistle ; and I would almost ask, could any thing but such a

comprehensive view have inspired the unparalleled expressions in the 22d, 23d, and 24th verses of the twelfth chapter?

Can, then, any reason be assigned why we should not adopt, in its fulness, the method thus placed before us? But we do not adopt it in its fulness, except we apply, to the Christian Church, St. Paul's practice respecting the Jewish Church. Is the one less the sphere of Divine power and goodness than the other? Or, rather, was the less perfect to be thus attended to by an Apostle, and the more perfect to be overlooked by us? Is this reasonable or consistent? We feel, in reading those most interesting chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that St. Paul was not only usefully but delightfully occupied; for, as far as our minds are susceptible of such an impression, we participate in the delight. Why, then, should we not be solicitous to have this exalted gratification extended and variegated? To imagine that we have not the means, would be to question whether our Saviour has been effectually working in his own dear-bought inheritance for seventeen hundred years.

That few are acquainted with these means, I allow; and that the appropriate spirit of Protestantism does not lead to an acquaintance with them, experience shews. For my part, I firmly believe that to be the reason why one half only of the western Church was set at large. New points were indispensable; but old ones were invaluable. The nicety of the business was, to gain the former without losing the latter. By the plan of Pro-

vidence, actually pursued, this twofold object has been astonishingly secured. But, as far as Protestants are concerned, it is the potentiality, and not the actuality (if I may speak thus barbarously), which has been as yet arrived at. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church performs this trust as if it were its sole object. Its piety at this day is the piety of the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries; and it is such, not by coincidence, but by design. In a word, I have the pleasure of thinking that you yourself, in reading François de Sales and Nicole, are virtually reading the Fathers of the Christian Church.

I have met, in a tract of Dr. Watts's, entitled, I think, "An Humble Attempt to re-animate Piety among Dissenters" (or something of that kind), a remarkable acknowledgment of the uncommon depth of piety found in the writings of celebrated Roman Catholics. The recognition is unqualified and cordial: but it is made to provoke Protestants to emulation; they being, in the Doctor's judgment, so much better furnished with means. But how strange, were this the case, that the fact should be as he allows it to be! Means will not operate infallibly in a given instance: but, in the general, as means have been, so will results be. Deeper piety, then, self-evidently (I mean, when discoverable in a class, or distinct description of people) implies proportionate means. Are then the pious Roman Catholics more deeply pious, in general, than a correspondent class of Protestants? I should think the inference inevitable, that Roman Catholics have, in some respect or

other, more efficient means of piety than Protestants.

I am satisfied the means I speak of consist in the one great point—the direct, steady, cordial commerce maintained with the ancient Church. I need not prove that this is maintained: it will be more in point to allow that it is excessively maintained. But, would it suffice in any more temperate form? When the half of those who are called Christians are so wholly neglectful, must not their defect be supplied by a surplus in some other quarter? I consider this disposition in the Roman Catholic Church, as a deposit for general benefit when the fit season shall come; but, if they who now possess Catholicity had not more than enough, there would not be enough for extended distribution hereafter.

I pray you, suppose the case of extended, universal, discriminative acquaintance with the successive luminaries of the Christian Church. Imagine exactly such an acquaintance with them as St. Paul appears to have had with the luminaries of the Jewish Church; and judge whether the mind thus informed would not have the most comfortable establishment in matters of belief; the most satisfactory guidance in matters of practice; the richest materials for reflection; the most substantial comment upon the Sacred Oracles? In proportion to such a view opening before a rightly disposed mind, would not the Apostle's expressions of being "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," and the being "come to the Mount Sion," &c. acquire new and unexampled force;

and convey a notion of the communion of saints, not equally to be caught without this elucidation?

Sir Francis Bacon takes pains to shew how beneficial a judicious history of literature would prove. After intimating what it ought to contain, he proceeds,—“the use and end of this work is not so much for curiosity and satisfaction of those that are lovers of learning, but chiefly for a more grave and serious purpose; which is, in few words, that it would make learned men wise in the use and administration of learning. For it is not St. Augustin’s nor St. Ambrose’s works that will make so wise a divine, as ecclesiastical history, thoroughly read, and observed; and the same reason is of learning.” I conceive this remark deeply to my purpose. None will dispute the truth of it in the instance to which it is applied. But how much more perfectly will it hold good, where it is not so much the history of knowledge in which we are to be conversant, as of moral excellence; or rather, indeed, the continued records of the various successful experiments made on the moral nature of man, in the laboratory of the Almighty Artist.

That much is to be done yet, in this way, I am fully sensible. And nothing will be done to purpose, until those whose peculiar duty it is to lead the way, and give aid to others, see the matter in something of the light in which I have been endeavouring to place it. Taste and inclination for such a pursuit, are exactly the things wanting. Were they really, in this instance, to come into full operation, it would imply a second

reformation, at least as valuable as that which has already been effected.

One step is certainly taken towards this great object, in the publication of such a work as Milner's Church History. I cannot compliment that honest and pious author, by supposing he had actually this object in view. On the contrary, I think his system, in some respects, astonishingly narrow. Instead of trying modern truth and piety by their agreement with ancient truth and piety, he inverts the rule; and appreciates the ancients (very much at least) by their agreement with the moderns. Thinking as he thought, it was great liberality to shew respect to any of them; for, from the second century, inclusive, to the Reformation, all of them were, in his judgment, erroneous, or, at least, defective. It must, therefore, be another kind of author that will open the view. But, whenever done, it will be by a continuation of the same sort of research; the piety, without the prejudice; equal diligence, but much more discrimination. For this I look with confidence, in the good time of unerring Providence.

I must terminate my remarks here. Read them; and consider them at your leisure: but trouble not yourself to make one remark to me upon them. In some of them, I had before my mind that most interesting young gentleman, Mr. —, who, I think, only needs a due portion of Catholicity, to make him the most interesting young man I ever knew. But how could he have it? And, yet, how deeply is he exposed, through want of it! He does not mean to desert his

father's substantial principles: and yet, he does not mean to live exactly as his father has lived. Where, then, will he draw the line? His fine understanding and delicate taste have met much to revolt them among what are deemed religious persons; and have met little, if any thing, of a kind fully suited to them. I never had more ambition to speak so as to be approved of, than in talking to him: for it would have been my delight to have conveyed any idea to his mind, that would have made him think, on certain matters, with stricter precision.

I am, my dear Madam, most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dec. 23, 1812.

* * * * I do not repent having come. I feel more and more, that I exactly did as I ought. And, yet, this is a place where the mind needs its own resources. I thank God, I am a little provided for in this latter respect: and, therefore, can be very happy in this solitude. Nothing in the power of my friend is omitted to make me so. But, though we can easily pain one another, we cannot so easily give positive pleasure to one another. Nothing on earth is more valuable than the kindness of friends; but we must be capable of enjoying it, or it will be thrown away upon us.

A sound mind, therefore, which carries its own manufactory of pleasure along with it, is the blessing of blessings. I feel this especially in removing from one place to another. When I was afflicted with my long nervousness, such movements were always, at least, matter of alarm to me. I have long surmounted those uneasinesses. But the recollection of them often recurs; and it seems to heighten the blessings I have now long enjoyed. How curious, as I have often observed to you, that you should not have known me, until my convalescence enabled me to shew myself, at least, not insensible to your kindness. I'll not talk to you, however, about yourself, further than to say, that I thank God, most cordially, for having brought me into your thoughts. You'll receive this, I hope, on Christmas-day; and, believe me, my heart and best blessings are with you, though my person is, unavoidably, at a distance from you.

Yours ever,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

* * * I should have said this last night, but that I felt an inclination to write to —; which I have carried into effect. I endeavour to be as kindly and pleasant as I can. But — does not understand me as you understand me. The simple fact is, you and I have somewhat of

decision in our minds : we are not presumptuous ; but we are not tremulous : this is not our nature. We know our weaknesses, I believe, just as really as if we continually shook and trembled under them. Perhaps, better ; for that kind of feeling has weakness in it ; and weakness is no help to just knowledge. They, therefore, may know themselves better who tremble less.

Possibly I go too far in associating you with myself in these feelings : that is, I may, possibly, appear so to you. But to me, who, by this time, know you almost as well as you know yourself, it does not seem so. I consider you as of the same general turn with myself : and I am glad you are ; for, if you were not, you would scarcely have the regard for me which you have. And to have lost that regard, after having been made acquainted with it (which, I think, would have been the case, if you were not what I have stated above), would have been to me as real a grief as any person could give me. Do not suppose I talk thus because I am sore about any body, or any thing : I thank God, I am not. I have no reason to think I am to be thus made sore. If I saw those who mistake me mistake their own path, I should be far more pained. I should then be pained ; now I am not. What signify, on the great scale, the temporary misconceptions of individual candidates for immortality ? They, who are, through God's wise appointment, strong, may well bear the narrowed ideas or versatile jealousies of the weaker brethren ; for that weakness will be soon over. In a little time we shall understand one

another fully: "The day shall break, and the shadows shall fly away." In the mean time, the dissonance we meet in some heightens the harmony we find elsewhere. And, even now, the pleasure rises far above the partial lessening of it; I was going to say pain, but I could not, for that is out of the question.

My cordial love always waits on you and Mr. La Touche. And, whether present or absent,

I am unfeignedly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO MISS FERGUSSON.

P.S.—Last day of the year, nine o'clock, 1812.

Cheerful, I trust for future good,
The hand that all the past bestowed;
Nor heed life's shifting scene:
Farewell, kind year, which still hast blest
My days with peace, my nights with rest;
And leav'st my mind serene.

The third line, however, does not quite suit me; as I do heed the shifting scenes, with great (but, I thank God, neither impassioned nor selfish) interest. I view the world, merely as the stage on which Providence is acting: and, deeming this a busy part of the drama, I conceive every thing which is now occurring to be pregnant with results; and I feel my solicitude grow more intense, in proportion as the movements appear more momentous.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

1812.

YESTERDAY evening, Mrs. Peter La Touche put a letter of yours into my hands. * * You are so good as to mention me in that letter. Believe me, I am most grateful for your friendly remembrance: and, as far as reciprocal regard can entitle me, I am not unworthy of it. The times I spent with you appear bright whenever I look back upon them: though, I thank God, they are not indebted for that brightness to any thing of contrast. My life, for the latter part of it, has been wonderfully happy; more so than many would suppose possible in this lower world. I have endeavoured to leave myself, as far as was consistent with present duty, in the hands of Providence; and the result is, that ten years have passed over me without one minute's actual depression. I think, therefore, I am qualified to pronounce on the genuineness of my superadded pleasure in such a course. And let me aver, that even so light a ground does not spoil the effect of the picture of which your reiterated kindness has put my mind in possession.

Whether I may again have the high gratification of seeing Barleywood, I know not. Should I continue in my ordinary state of health, a visit to England, after two or three years of absence from it, will be a natural enough occurrence; and I think it will be morally impossible that I should fix upon any line of movement which would not, first or

last, fall in with that point of kindest as well as most pleasurable attraction.

I began this letter several days ago ; but was interrupted by one of those attacks of sickness which you have, more than once, witnessed. I had been ailing for some weeks before it came upon me ; insomuch as to have come from Bellevûe to Dublin, in order to be under the care of a man of skill. If I can judge from my present feelings, one complaint has helped me to throw off another ; and I seem, now, to be emerging from all together. I have thought more than once, within this last month, that I was actually about to break down : indeed, never before did the apprehension seize me so strongly. I hope I shall learn, from my feelings then, the necessity of having every thing ready for that time when the event must come without possibility of deception. It is, certainly, not enough, at that awful period, to have a quiet conscience : this, of course, implies freedom from mental pain ; but it does not, therefore, support under bodily pain or weakness. For this purpose there must be, not merely reality, but strength of religion. The former does well enough in health and easy circumstances ; but, when calamity impends, the defence must be in proportion to the blast, and the resource, to the exigence. In fitting his servants for this extremity, God, probably, uses different methods with different persons. For my part, I can conceive nothing adequate to the case, but an established and consciously vital habit of intercourse with God ; not only as he is the Eternal Spirit,

but as he is united to our nature in the adorable person of the Messiah. To have inward, easy, uninterrupted access to the Shepherd of the flock, so as not only to open our whole hearts to him, but to feel "virtue coming out of him," making us (as Addison finely expresses it) "powerful in his power, wise by his wisdom, happy by his happiness,"—this, substantially possessed, cordially and constantly exercised, and, by being so exercised, and met, and cherished from above, advancing still more and more in strength and ease, in depth and clearness,—this, I humbly conceive, is the true secret, by virtue of which one may "pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil."

You have, in these words, few as they are, the nucleus of my creed; and, were only my fulness of possession equal to the completeness of my conviction, I should have no further care for life or for death. For several years now, I have been putting this principle variously to the test; and, however I may have been wanting, in countless instances, to myself (not grossly, I thank God, in any instance, but infinitely in degree and circumstance, and in follies and omissions such as to need continual forgiveness), I must give testimony that the principle itself has never been wanting to me. My conscious feeling has been, this is "the one thing needful;" all I want is, to have it more effectually.

To this view I have never been disposed to add any doctrine, except such as are essentially implied in itself: such as the Trinity in Unity, the

strict Deity of Christ, and the Divine operation of the Spirit of God upon the mind and heart. I could not hold, as I have stated, without also holding these. The intercession of our blessed Saviour, and the infinite merit of his interposition, I receive as indubitable; but they are not equally intelligible to me as the other three points. I cannot affix to those terms as clear ideas as I think I can to others. Of appeasing Divine wrath, I own I have no idea: God appeasing his own wrath, would, I humbly conceive, be a strange supposition. But the interest which the Eternal Word takes in us, and the labour he has expended upon us, being a cause of increasing Divine favour and regard, I deem very intelligible. God loves nothing as he loves his co-eternal Son. He loves us in due measure, as intelligences derived from himself; but he loves his Son infinitely, as "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God." Here, therefore, and here only, the love of the Eternal Father enlarges itself in infinite, yet most restful, effluence throughout eternity. It is perfection acting on perfection in the way most worthy of itself, and with most perfect reciprocation. When, then, we become the subjects of the Son's special care, the purchase of his labours and sufferings, his chosen nation and peculiar people, destined to shew forth his virtues (1 St. Peter, ii. 9) "to principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Ephes. iii. 10), we acquire a new relation to the Eternal Father; we become endeared to him by engagements, in depth and tenderness exceeding all that we could conceive: united to the Son (as members even of the

visible Church) by that mystical polity which he administers, and (if members of the invisible Church) by that vital spirit which he transfuses, we necessarily share in the infinite love of which the Son is the paramount and illimitable object. And, in proportion as the Church collectively, or its vital members individually, manifest the advancing handiwork of the Divine redintegrator, they, through virtue of this communicated excellence, must rise, more and more, in the estimation of Him, whose approbation of the work is only exceeded by his delight in the worker.

This, I conceive, is our deepest and most heart-satisfying warrant for coming to the Father, through the Son. I pretend not to censure the ideas which any pious person may find really encouraging or edifying; but, I repeat, that what I have now stated, I myself best understand; and I seem to myself to see in it a body of truth which can never become less bright or less interesting. It rests on nothing transient or mutable: it implies provision, not only for everlasting, but ever-growing felicity.

I think the Apostle had the substance of this in view when he told the Colossians, "Your life is hid with Christ in God:" as if he had said, "Your spiritual life is not merely a communication from the Fountain of Life, but it is a result of that unfathomable intercourse, within the sphere of Deity, by which the Divine Persons mutually exercise their adorable excellences, and contribute each to the mysterious felicity of the whole. The scheme of redemption has grown not merely out

of the love of God to man, but also out of that adorable, unremitting interchange of love, which eternally subsists between the Father and the Son. Your life is hid with Christ in God : the immediate source of your life is in the Son ; but, by being in Him, it is, through Him, in the bosom of the Father. And their union of ineffable love is to us the pledge and assurance of mercy and grace, of tenderest benignity, and richest communication. To be co-operative in beneficence, is not only to enjoy—each—the kindly act, but it is to enjoy one another ; and to be the means or material of that sublimest fruition, is the lofty privilege of the redeemed race of Adam.

I hope that, in attempting to explain myself, I have not become wholly unintelligible. My simple opinion is, that the created universe was called into existence to be a sphere of action for the Eternal Word ; “all things” having been created not only “by Him,” but “for Him.” “There are diversities of administrations,” says St. Paul, “but the same Lord.” Christ, therefore, is the administrator of the providential scheme of this world ; and the drama which he carries on is that which “angels desire to look into.” But he is, also, the spiritual head, from whom flows all the moral life that has ever been in man : and he is so not merely for the good of man, but for his own glory—for the fuller and more felicitating manifestation of himself to the intelligent universe. His, consequently, we are, in every sense, and on every account. And, because we are his, his dear-bought property, his regained subjects, and (if not

wanting to ourselves) his re-animated members, we approach the Eternal Father with a confidence to which nothing can be superadded; and of which nothing can deprive us, so long as we "are followers of that which is good."

When I began, I had no intention of giving you so much theology; but, when I commence any such subject, I find it difficult to get soon out of it. I have long wished to say something to you, for the purpose of proving myself not ungrateful for that kind remembrance with which I know, in spite of my negligences, I am still favoured.

I beg to be remembered affectionately to all the ladies; and especially to Mrs. Martha.

Believe me, my dear Madam,

Most faithfully and immutably yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Jan. 19, 1813.

I WRITE to you from the comfortable mansion of John Jebb; made still more comfortable to me by the Archbishop having accompanied me. We came here yesterday; and he returns to-morrow: so that it was a pure exercise of his accustomed kindness, for the equal gratification of Jebb and myself.

I delight in high-toned pleasures. And I have, in this instance, such a one as does not often occur in real life. Few who, nominally, possess power in this world, have so real an exercise of

it as Bishops of our Establishment, in the instance of patronage. But, alas! few, even of these, have yet learned to use their power on the principles which alone will bear even the examination of the world, much less their own reflections. To accompany, therefore, an Archbishop to the place where he, on the purest principles, had so planted one of the worthiest of men as to confer earthly happiness; to witness the strong, though quiet exultation of his benignant mind, in contemplating the comfort he himself had, instrumentally, created; and, at the same moment, to feel that I myself had been the means of bringing this effectual benefactor and this happy beneficiary together; the whole, I say, makes out a case of no common occurrence; and one which, I am sure, will plead my excuse for being more dilatory than, in any other circumstances, I should have been, in my endeavours to meet you in Dublin.

But luxuries are short-lived. His Grace, as I said, returns to-morrow; and, though I am bound to Jebb for one week, that must be my limit. * *

I am telling you all about my movements, as if it were a business of little less moment than Buonaparte's going back to Paris. But I felt that naming a doubtful day required explanation, and I knew not how to do it more simply.

Rural retirement cannot be more realised than in this place. Its character is tranquillity. The immediate scenery is a plain, undecorated, level country; but the greater part of the horizon is rich in distant hills and mountains, which the flat foreground shews to the fullest advantage. The

landscape, therefore, though not striking at first view, becomes more and more interesting the longer it is looked at. This fine day has favoured it as much as could be at this season. At first, there was a mist which shut out remote distances. But the Archbishop observed the air to have grown clearer, and immediately came in, and brought out Jebb and me, that we might enjoy the prospect along with him. * * *

Adieu, my dear madam: my kindest and most cordial wishes are, with Mr. L.,

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

LETTER TO LADY ———, ON THE RELIGIOUS CULTIVATION OF THE CHILDISH MIND AND HEART.

MY DEAREST LADY,

2d Jan. 1815, Bellevue,
half past 7.

THAT I may begin the year well, I sit down this morning to say something to you on the subject which you have at heart.

One of the earliest questions respecting Religious Education would seem to be, Ought explanation to accompany verbal instruction from the first, or ought the memory first to be exercised, and explanation to come in afterward, as indicated by circumstances?

I confess I prefer the latter mode. I would teach a child, by rote, a short prayer for morning and evening, and, by degrees, proceed in the catechism; stopping, I think, in the first instance

at the end of the Lord's Prayer, but going on to the conclusion the moment that a question might be thought to arise, why there was a pause there? I would answer such an inquiry, not by explanation, but by forthwith doing the thing.

In the mean time, especially if there were a readiness in committing to memory, I would teach a few Psalms by heart from the Prayer Book (prose), beginning with short ones; for instance, with the 23d, the ideas of which are fitted to lay a happy foundation; then the 1st Psalm, and the 15th, with any others which your judgment would prefer, adding, at length, when practicable without too much labour, the 139th Psalm, which I cannot but consider as one of the most impressive portions of Holy Scripture, as it so nobly teaches that which is above all things necessary to be felt,—the ever constant presence of God.

Along with the prose Psalms, I would try the liking of a child respecting those of Tate and Brady, several of which are substantially well versified, and, perhaps, might be better liked, and more readily learned. I would not let these, in any case, supersede the others; but, rather, intermingle them, for the sake of variety.

I must not omit that the 2d Psalm ought to be lodged in the child's memory, on account of its wonderful reference to our Saviour; the history of whom, I conceive, might best be learned, first, in some abridgement of the Evangelic narrative: then chosen passages of the Gospel might, by degrees, be added, until acquaintance should, at length, be acquired with the whole.

At the same time, a knowledge of Old Testament history should be acquired by means of some good abridgement, introducing actual portions, in the more interesting instances; and, as soon as there was an opening for it in the mind, intermingling chosen passages from Isaiah, with the reading of the four Gospels: the greater part, also, of Daniel would blend admirably with the same course.

In the line I have endeavoured to trace, I presume upon questions being more and more asked, as the course goes on; and the answering such questions may be found the best means of instruction. The young mind is fitted to do a wonderful deal for itself, otherwise how could a child learn to speak? To elicit and guide this tendency is the grand secret; and it is with a view to excite, rather than entangle it, that I recommend, in the first instance, the judicious exercise of memory, in preference to explaining as one proceeds.

I speak, however, on these points with unfeigned diffidence, being myself so mere a theorist in the business. It strikes me, however, that the plan I recommend may be useful on a further account. I conceive a certain submissiveness of mind is as useful, as an excess of it would be pernicious. Not to know how to rely on just authority, must expose to endless scepticism; and if nothing were to be taken for granted, there would be no general advance in knowledge. Each generation must set out anew, and trace for itself each step which had been trodden before. Besides,

Providence clearly leads to submissiveness, in having made human life commence in such weakness both of body and mind : to bend this weakness, therefore, in the way which parents judge right, instead of permitting it to take its own bend, is the practice pointed out by all the bearings of the case ; and, accordingly, it is said, " Train up a child," &c.

Yet the Catechism, when verbally learned, must be made intelligible. There is a special necessity for explanation in this instance, beyond what exists respecting the Psalms and passages of Scripture ; for these are often fitted to excite sentiment by an immediate address to the heart : they also present imagery, which takes possession of the imagination, and saves the trouble of reasoning ; a significant picture is brought before the mind's eye, which says more in a moment than argument could convey in an hour. But the Catechism professes merely to communicate truth, not to excite feeling. Here, therefore, the imagination gives no aid ; and a distinct apprehension can only be had, by an actual elucidation of the expressions. Explanation, of course, in this instance, is indispensable ; but, as I said, it is not to be attempted at first. Somewhat of feeling, awakened by those other means, would be a most desirable preparative. All this, however, must depend on circumstances ; for so soon as the mind becomes inquisitive, or even gives marks of intellectual susceptibility, it will be necessary to communicate right ideas, lest wrong ones should be formed and get prior possession.

It would be by conversation, rather than by giving any thing to be read, that I conceive the Catechism might be best explained. I hope hereafter to say something to you expressly on this subject. In the mean time, I will submit to your consideration a thought which I conceive of leading importance.

As the foundation of every good feeling consists in the sense of God, this must be established in every possible way, both in mind and heart. As I have already hinted, it will most naturally begin in sentiment,—in those deep impressions which the sublime language of the Psalms, in particular, is so fitted to produce. I am confident the heart is essentially framed for receiving such impressions. But if they are not permitted to be formed pleasurablely, the kindly feeling may soon subside, not again (at least equally) to arise. There will be a danger of this unhappy issue, if, in what is said respecting God, the awful outweighs the amiable. There can be nothing luminous or inviting in first principles which suppose Divine justice unyieldingly vindictive; the law, under which man is born, inexorably severe; and the world, of which each individual makes a part, already in a state of virtual reprobation. In such views, there is nothing to attract human nature; and very much to revolt it. I confess, therefore, I would keep out of sight every book, large or small, which inculcates these doctrines; and I would continually impress, that God is infinitely kind to every creature that he has made, except such as presumptuously and obstinately break his

commandments. The paternal character of God is that which a child is taught by actual experience best to apprehend. And by dwelling on this most delightful of all representations unreservedly and supremely, every faculty and every feeling, which nature is beginning to evolve, is likely to be imbued with cordial, generous, exalted religion.

In conveying this knowledge of God, all visible nature is in readiness to contribute aid. The beauty, grandeur, endless provision, minute care, universal hilarity, the very greenness of the earth, and bright blue of the sky, all unite in proclaiming the adorable Author to be loving to every man, and merciful in all his works. To shroud this primeval light, therefore, in a cloudy night of grim doctrines, appears to me, of all infatuations to which Christian people are liable, the most unaccountable. But in the instance of infantine instruction, I conceive there is but the one alternative: it must either irrecoverably distort the mental character if received, or, by being rejected, make religion itself ever after detestable. But are, therefore, the awful attributes of God to be omitted? By no means; they are indispensable, in their due proportion and place. But, I venture to say, they are to be urged not as a source of doctrinal alarm, on the grounds of what Adam did five thousand years ago, but as the most reasonable as well as powerful guard upon heart and life now. The anger of God, his terrible majesty, his vengeance in the day of his wrath, the dreadfulness, even in this present life, of living under that

displeasure which every power of nature is ready each moment, were he but to give the word to any, to carry into resistless execution—these truths must be wisely, strongly, constantly enforced; but so enforced, as to excite conscientious vigilance, not cheerless despondency.

You'll observe, what I complain of is, that these awful truths should be employed to frighten into the belief of certain doctrines, rather than to awaken practical exertion. Whatever there may be of a purely doctrinal kind in Holy Scripture, it was never meant to be itself, immediately, a source of comfort to any, still less a source of puzzle and possible disgust to the young; but simply and solely to exclude all doubt of honest exertion being available. If there be in any one such despondency as paralyses exertion, or chills devotion, there are assurances and pledges in readiness to dispel these apprehensions, and to clear that ground of infinite mercy on which hope of reception at the throne of grace rests. But deeply, in my mind, do they err, who suppose that this mercy receives persons to Divine favour, independent of moral qualification. Its exclusive use, on the contrary, is to make moral exertion (that is, the turning of the heart and mind to God and goodness in all its degrees) available and successful. Every thing, therefore, respecting God, ought to be so stated; and no otherwise stated, above all, to children, than as may most surely tend to establish affectionate conscientiousness in every stage of life. To young or old, I conceive, the Divine attributes are to be represented as

terrible to nothing but wilful sin; and to that, terrible beyond our utmost power of mind to conceive; but, in every other instance, gracious, accessible, ready to hear prayer, aid weakness, communicate strength,—to be, in a word, every thing to man, which man's infinite wants require.

I enlarge on this point involuntarily; not because you need such remarks, but because I am persuaded that misconceptions here have produced, and are producing, all descriptions of religious error, whether Popish, sectarian, Arian, Socinian, deistical, or atheistical. Against all these there is no preservative, for all these there is no cure, equal to wise, amiable, interesting, moral ideas of our God and Saviour. We must be revolted by that which is naturally revolting. These movements depend, respectively, upon laws of nature not to be controlled; and whatever crosses, instead of following, the fibre of our nature, must either produce its effect unnaturally, or not at all.

If any doubt of the entire orthodoxy of these views should arise in your mind, I think I might engage beforehand to dispel it. I believe I may say, that no one maintains the necessity of supernatural grace more than I, in order to the effecting any thing substantially or permanently good. But I equally believe that this heavenly influence is in readiness to be communicated to all who make an honest effort to use their present power, whatever it be; and I am persuaded, wherever, in young or old, in whatever external circumstances or degree of light, the gracious God perceives this effort to be made, it is sure of being approved, and

met with effectual co-operation. To make children feel this, in their own case, without doubt, drawback, or obscurity, I conceive to be a primary object.

This letter is but a beginning on what it relates to.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST LADY,

Feb. 8, 1815.

I AM not fit this day for any dry labour, as indisposition is variously annoying me. I turn, therefore, to you, in talking to whom I shall enjoy as much ease as it is possible for occupation of the kind to give me.

I stated the necessity of establishing in the young mind an affectionate sense of ever-present Deity. This, however, will not be either permanent or practical, if it be not sustained by self-evident reason. The necessity for this support would be found in all instances ; but, I conceive, from what you have told me, especially in your little ———. Well-chosen evidences, therefore, of the existence, omnipotence, omnipresence, and infinite goodness of God, are to be discreetly conveyed into his mind, in such a manner as that each shall give not only a clear and complete, but also pleasurable conviction of the primary religious verity.

It strikes me, however, that in such communications a certain order is to be observed. The marks of creative power are every where around us ;

but, in order that the force of them may be adequately felt, I think the first attention should be directed to one's self. God's wonderful formation of the human person is that which comes directly home to human feeling ; and, besides, it furnishes those very instances which admit of the easiest and most impressive elucidation.

In order to your fitness to discharge this duty, I think you need only look into one book, namely, Paley's " Natural Theology." Probably you have read it ; if you have, you will feel that I do not mention it without reason ; if you have not, it is well worth your reading for your own amusement, independently of every other object. I recommend that, in reading it, or if you have already read it, in looking it over, you should mark every particular that you think would suit your leading purpose. I would add, that, as such instances might appear to you more or less simple, you would distinguish them by a variety in marking, so as to begin with the more obvious, and proceed to the less easy.

I would particularly point out four to you, which, it strikes me, you might begin with,—at least, with two of them ; the other two might need more exercise of thought. 1. The exquisite structure of the windpipe, which you'll find in Paley, p. 177. This I put first, because the actual safety which we enjoy amid such constant, and, as it should seem, at first view, imminent danger, is evidence of the goodness, as well as of the power of God. The very thought, therefore, of such a daily hair-breadth escape from extreme calamity, the

nature of which is often trivially (but so seldom fatally) experienced in what is called “a thing going wrong,” tends directly to recollection, dependence, and gratitude. This alone elucidates powerfully that emphatic saying of St. Paul, that “in Him we live, and move, and have our being.” The second instance you will find at the 144th page. It is that of the ligament across the instep, to keep the tendons of the foot at their due stretch, and yet preserve them from starting, which, when tightened, they must otherwise have done, in consequence of the angle. Paley, though briefly, yet clearly, explains the fact; and you might have perceived a somewhat resembling expedient in extending a bell-wire from wall to wall. Every angle, you may observe, requires an apparatus, which at once confines the wire to the corner, and yet provides for its being stretched at pleasure. The apparatus, now referred to, is the more striking, in consequence of its obviousness. In most instances, the use of any particular part in the interior structure of man needs to be pointed out. Here it is at once seen; and Paley says, most justly, “it is so decisive a mark of intention, that it always appeared to me to supersede, in some measure, the necessity of seeking for any other observation upon the subject.” I wonder Paley did not mention, that there is exactly the same provision at the wrist also. If you look for the word *annular* in Johnson’s “Dictionary,” you will see this curious fact asserted respecting both ankle and wrist, by Dr. Cheyne. The third instance you will find at the 190th page. It is what

Paley calls the package. The first paragraph so eloquently states the wonderful fact, as to leave nothing to be added. The subsequent paragraphs are illustrative; of which you'll take as much as you think proper.

The fourth instance I mention rather for its wonderful, than its convincing character. Doubtless it possesses this latter, but not in any peculiar degree. You will find the passage at the 152d page. The part of it to which I refer is the astonishing statement respecting the rapidity with which the blood circulates; and, also, the tremendous account of what is ever passing within-side of a whale.

Should you approve of my general idea, it will be always in your power to carry it into practice, in that manner, and in those degrees, which you yourself see to be at once interesting, safe, and substantially instructive. One motive, amongst others, for my suggesting this method, is, that little books of natural history being generally, at present, a part of the first reading of children, it is highly desirable that this should excite religious associations. The elements of these being once introduced, and the foundations laid in a few such instances as those referred to, the idea would be recalled by every thing of a like nature:—thus a sense of God would be sustained and cherished by objects, beyond number, of necessary daily occurrence.

It seems to me that such training as I propose, is like teaching the grammar of natural religion: and it is most sure that in Holy Scripture na-

tural religion is regarded as the basis on which revealed religion fixes her seat. If you ask proof of this, I refer you to Acts, xiv. 17 ; xvii. 26, 27, 28 ; and Romans, i. 19, 20. But there is a consideration which peculiarly impresses me as recommending such initiation. The boundless works of Omnipotence surround us on every hand : they arrest the eyes of the infant ; and must, of course, engage mental attention so soon as it can be exerted. The impression made will depend on what has been already conceived in the mind. The thought will be puzzled, distracted, set adrift ; or fixed, concentrated, and turned into affection ; in proportion as the habit has been already formed of recognising the Creator in the creature : because, rightly caught in one or two leading instances, it will exert itself in countless instances in all that present themselves.

How many have been absolutely lost (bewildered and made atheists) in contemplating the immensity of the universe ! This was deplorably the case with the French astronomers. Possibly, had they begun with what was next them, themselves, instead of plunging into an illimitable ocean, they might have concluded more wisely as philosophers, and more happily as men. In my next I shall be as wholly evangelical as I am now philosophical.

I am most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST LADY,

April 8, 1815.

* * * What I said of John Wesley might require explanation. I think, however, you will fully understand, that the ease of his religion did not imply that self-restraint was to be wanting where it was necessary ; namely, in the imperfect Christian, the yet unsettled mind and heart. He wholly meant that the religion of the Gospel, when cordially embraced and faithfully acted upon, not only ensured a future, but created a present heaven ; and that, consequently, whoever was not happy, must be, if not defective in reason, certainly defective in religion. Morbid melancholy might, he supposed, obstruct the comfort of an upright Christian ; but he was of opinion that nothing else could. In circumstantial matters, I should find in John Wesley much to except against. The stress he laid on sudden movements, for instance, is perfectly opposite to my taste. I am far from branding those extraordinary occurrences with the random charge of enthusiasm ; but I am sure the ordinary method of Divine goodness in reclaiming the spirit, is by a gradual, deep, but noiseless operation. It may occasionally be expedient to act upon men's minds in another manner : an individual may be destined to some signal purpose ; a body of people may be formed to accomplish some special end. The possibility, therefore, of unaccountable circumstances accompanying a valuable religious substance, I cannot for one moment question. But, as I said, I neither desire nor like any thing in religion but what is calm,

sober, and intelligible; and I am confident that these are the characters of all that is essentially Christian. I am sure the effect is not the less deep because it has been quietly wrought. There never was a more tranquil teacher than our Redeemer. The voice of him that cried in the wilderness went on before; but of Himself it was prophesied, "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets." With exact suitableness to this, a whirlwind, an earthquake, and a fire, preceded the Divine presence when about to be manifested to Elijah, but itself was notified by "a still small voice." But, in my mind, the substance of John Wesley's religion is separable from the circumstance; and I confess, I as much love the one as I should shrink back from the other. It pleased Providence that the two views of religion, the doctrinal system of Mr. Whitfield (of which evangelicism is a modified branch), and the affectionate system of John Wesley, should so come on together as to be strikingly contrasted with each other. I have no doubt that each had its use. I believe if John Wesley's system had come forward alone, the diffusion of religious sentiment would not have been adequately provided for; sufficiency of quantity was necessary to the Divine purpose, as well as soundness of quality. Old Puritanism, therefore, was revived by the instrumentality of Whitfield; while a simpler, livelier, happier exhibition of Christian principle than, perhaps, since the death of the Apostles the Christian world had yet witnessed, was to be provided for in John Wesley.

You see that, in all I say, I allow that the theology of those honest men, Whitfield, Newton, Scott, Basil Wood, &c. contains in it all that is indispensable to a state of grace—the life of the soul, spiritual and eternal. In truth, if I know my own heart, I look at them with more than candour. I think they have had their place, and a most important place, in the great dispensation of grace. But long observation and much thought, and, I hope, not a little study in the laboratory of my own heart, unite to convince me that there is a higher view than theirs, of the life and immortality that are brought to light by the Gospel. I am ready to think, that the calling attention to that higher view, was John Wesley's special designation; and, by virtue of the discrimination, which I myself have endeavoured to exercise, between the circumstantial and substantial part of John Wesley's scheme, I conceive his teaching may eventually prove a source of as deep and widespread utility as ever yet was derived from an uninspired instructor. In the first place, while Evangelicals are taking indefatigable pains to explain and recommend what they deem truth, John Wesley was anxious about one thing only,—the animating the heart with love. This he knew to be “the end of the commandment,” the vital purpose of the whole Gospel. He used to repeat with rapture the lines of Prior :

“ Sweet peace she brings wherever she arrives,
She builds our quiet as she forms our lives,
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.”

No doubt the Calvinists speak also of the love of God; but there is a difference: the Calvinists make Christian love chiefly to consist in gratitude for redemption; while John Wesley, not questioning this to be a heightener of love, placed the essence of the love in a far deeper thing (not connected, as even the purest gratitude is, with self)—in loving God, as it were, because we cannot but love him; because the soul feels God is its centre, its resting place, its immutable home; that He is that object for which the soul was made; and, in steady adhesion to which, the mind consciously possesses peace, enjoys the infinite good, imbibes essential rectitude, and advances through growing happiness to its destined perfection.

Thus, in John Wesley's view, religion began not so much in sense of past misconduct, as in consciousness of present want. He did not exclude the former, but he conceived the symptom of returning life to consist in the latter; a feeling in the inmost soul, equivalent to that admirable sentiment of St. Augustin: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our heart is restless until it resteth in thee." The discovery of this truth, John Wesley accounted to be the beginning of wisdom; and the prayer of the heart, to which this feeling necessarily gave rise, he was satisfied never would be long offered in vain. With all this, I have no wish you should sit down to read John Wesley. Were I near you, I would point out passages to you, which I think you would feel with me to be invaluable: as it is, such observations as I am now making, will, I

hope, be intelligible, without closer acquaintance with the quarter from whence they come. I offer them because I do not know any other instance of religious teaching to which I could equally apply for elucidation of my subject ; for, though I greatly differ from John Wesley in the calculation he makes of sudden conversions (as he seems to think the greater number are of that nature), still I feel that the circumstance of suddenness is separable from the substantial results which he describes, inasmuch as the happiness which he supposes to be enjoyed, in consequence of a sudden illapse, may just as well be understood to spring up gradually, like the light of the morning. Making, then, this change in his statement, I humbly conceive that nothing can be more consonant to the whole tenor of the New Testament, and to the authentic history of the best men of all ages, than that cheerful piety, habitual pleasure in devotion, and consequent settled self-enjoyment, which John Wesley maintained to be the inheritance of the true Christian, and of which he gives so vivid a specimen in the passage which I quoted in my last. In remarking on the differences between the Evangelical party and what I deem simpler, purer, and nobler truth, I the more naturally recur to John Wesley, because I think, to him more than to any human instrumentality, I am indebted for whatever light I have on those subjects. I had learned early not to lean on John Wesley for every thing ; therefore, my respect for him never, I do believe, in any instance, warped my judgment. But I saw in him

what was inexpressibly worth attention ; and what served to satisfy me, beyond all future shadow of doubt, that the Calvinists' preference of themselves, as if they were the only sound and complete interpreters of evangelical doctrine, was as unfounded a fancy as ever was dreamed of. I saw in John Wesley, and in the practical effects of his teaching, that the Calvinist doctrines were not necessary to the attainment of inward and spiritual religion. I saw that "a clean heart" and a "right spirit" (that "new creation" which, in St. Paul's view, is every thing, and without which all is nothing) could be as effectually arrived at by those who thought nothing about those doctrines, as by those who seemed to think of little else. This, to my mind, was decisive. Those who held those tenets, believed them not only true but important. Important they could only be by a supposed necessary connexion with spiritual life and well-being. Here, there is spiritual life and well-being, as evident, as substantial, without them as with them.

It follows, then, inevitably, that their advocates estimate them falsely. They cannot be Divine truths ; otherwise the great business of the heart and life could not go on as well without them. I see, evidently, that it does so go on : therefore, why should I receive them or trouble myself about them ? But I positively saw much more : I saw Christian piety in a far pleasanter, happier, and, as I conceived, stronger form, without those doctrines than with them. I saw this, not judging merely by individual cases, but on the broadest scale to

which I could extend my observation. On one side, there was peace, and cheerfulness, and the sunshine of the breast ; on the other, piety was chiefly expressed by groaning under inward depravity, and lamenting over heartless prayers and hourly infidelities. This latter display was revolting to human nature, whose unconquerable aim is happiness. Remember my second quotation, in my last letter, from Baxter, where this is said in the strongest language. Still, I must not appear unduly to eulogise Wesleyan Methodism : what I am saying was most strictly true respecting John Wesley himself ; but it was verified in a few only of his people. In order to this effect, there were needed, not only sound principles, but a faithful living up to them. The Wesleyan Methodists had the former ; but they had not equally the latter. Therefore, they, too, could groan and look sad, as well as their less enlightened brethren.

The Calvinistic class had not the vital principles of cheerfulness ; and, therefore, could only manifest it where it was strongly possessed from nature, or where the individual had for himself caught a brighter ray. The Wesleyans had much of the principles, but there were many things in their practical system of an opposite tendency ; and few, as I said, acted up to their light with faithfulness. There were, however, valuable specimens, which sufficiently shewed what was attainable, if persons were not wanting to themselves. And here I wish to make a passing observation ; the reasonableness, I trust, will be apparent. It is this : that the evidence on the happy side is, in its own

nature, more conclusive than the evidence on the unhappy side. The unhappy religionist must, of course, belong to the lower class of pious persons. The only question is, whether there be a higher class? Now, ten thousand unhappy religionists would only prove that they themselves had proceeded no further; whereas, one clear consistent instance of religious happiness would directly prove that better things lay beyond, if only there was enough of zeal and perseverance in those who undertook the pursuit. Thus, ten thousand invalids, joining in the assertion that there was no such thing as corporeal health in the world, would all fall before the opposite evidence of one sound healthy man. He would demonstrate that there was such a thing: they only could prove that they themselves did not possess it. But, really, it does not rest on evidence. Both parties have enabled us to look into their internal principles; and the impartial examiner may understand for himself, why the one is cheerful and the other disconsolate; why the one attains and enjoys a competent measure of spiritual health, and why the other only makes the best, by means of cordials and anodynes, of a confessed load of spiritual disease. I cannot, however, go into this large topic; besides, I have said something to this point in the last letter: indeed, almost the whole, in some degree, bears upon it. But I must remark on a difference between the two ways of thinking, which I cannot but think peculiarly interesting: it is—that the side to which I adhere, gives the intellect, or reasoning faculty, a great deal less to do than

the Evangelical side. Observe how poor Mr. Scott is kept on the stretch by doctrines. The book is not "The Power of Grace," but "The Force of Truth;" and mark how, in the close of his work, he winds up all in truth, truth, truth! with but a slight sprinkling here and there of any thing really spiritual and internal. Alas! what would become of mankind if there was no way to heaven but through a path thus darkened and contracted with hedges of theological thorns? The good and wise Cecil (for a wiser Calvinist has not lived in modern times) pursued a different course with a dying woman whom he was called to visit; as you may see in the last paragraph of that section of his *Remains* which is entitled, "Of visiting sick-beds;" and I refer you with pleasure to the concluding sentence* of that section, as expressing a persuasion which virtually rejects all theological severity. But who ever was less doctrinal, or more divinely simple, than our Lord himself in his discourse with the woman of Samaria? "If thou hadst known the gift of God," says he, "and who it is that says to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and he would have given thee the living water." How sublimely gracious! "If thou hadst known, thou wouldst have asked, and he would have given thee." Is there any thing here required but an appetite of the heart for goodness? And when the Giver of all good thus

* "Were a benighted inhabitant of Otaheite to feel the wretchedness of his present life, and lift up his soul to the God he worshipped as a supreme Being, for happiness, no doubt God would hear such a prayer."—CECIL'S *Works*, vol. iv. p. 95.

unreservedly proclaims—"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" who has a right to demand additional requisites, or to make the narrow path narrower than it has been left by its Author? But, if there be truth in this simplicity, how superior it is in convenience! Religion may be thus propounded with incomparably greater facility than when attended by an equipage of doctrines, some terrible and all puzzling.

Were I obliged by my conviction of truth to introduce religion in a doctrinal form, I neither should know how to begin nor how to end. But, in my view of the Gospel, nothing is easier than to engage those who are at once intellectual and sober-minded in a religious conversation. Human nature is always accessible; what it needs to make it happy is a fair subject for rational consideration; and the pursuit of this inquiry leads to every thing, directly and without force, which I deem essential. There is corruption to be subdued; there is weakness to be upheld: renovating grace is indispensable for the former purpose; illuminating, strengthening, comforting grace, for the latter purpose. But, the want once sincerely felt, the desire once sincerely awakened, the wished-for blessing hangs on this simple condition;—"Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you: for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." I confess, the more I reflect on this view of religion, which makes it not a matter of puzzling inquiry and hair-splitting distinction, but an

inward transaction, the movements of which are matter of consciousness, and the results of which are as much within observation and experience as bodily health and sickness: the more, I say, I rejoice in the providential teaching with which I have been favoured. I consider the great Gospel facts, not as subjects of discussion, but as sources of influence fitted to occupy and elevate our noblest affections; and thus to act upon us (with the quickening power of that Spirit from whom all our sensibility of heart and mind must come) as so many mysterious magnets, drawing us from earth to heaven; at least, making us feel so much of heaven as to give us victory over the world. Of these Divine attractions and influences our Redeemer himself, "God with us," is the centre and fountain-head. Here alone, I hold, is the cure of the diseased soul; its disease is sin itself,—the inward principle, the rooted infection. Will doctrines heal this malady? No; but the internal grace of which the Apostle spoke, when he said, "Of his fulness have all we received;" and of which Christ himself spoke, when he said to St. Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" will do it effectually. And how is this grace to be obtained? I recur to what has been already quoted: "Ask, and it shall be given unto you."

Can any thing be added to this fulness? Why then should not we adhere to it, and leave perplexing doctrines to those who delight in them? We may, as I said, speak of these things to all. But I add what is interesting in the highest degree; we may speak of these things to children. To

children, doctrines are self-evidently unsuitable; but grace to guide, strengthen, correct, establish, may be made as clear as the day. And even our Redeemer, as the fountain of grace, might soon be apprehended; because it might be elucidated by natural facts, such as the influence of the sun upon the vegetable world; but doctrines can be illustrated by nothing, at least by nothing naturally beautiful or attractive. A Calvinist would then reply to me, and say, But if you make so little of doctrines, what will you do with Scripture? Are not those doctrines of which you make so little, in the New Testament? It would require time to answer this objection. But I speak my sober opinion: I think their doctrines are not in the new Testament: I think the passages of that appearance mean quite another thing; not what is doctrinal, but what is inward and experimental; intended to excite prayer and watchfulness, not in any respect to be a consolation under dulness in the one, or remissness in the other.

This little letter has been so long in writing, that I now send it off, at the risk of its being grossly incorrect; but were I not to do so it must wait till Monday.

I am, my dearest Lady,

Ever most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dawson Street, May 25, 1815.

I HAVE had trials, to my own apprehension, of the thoughts which a near view of eternity awakens. I hope I have felt something of what it is to look at death with an easy conscience. And, most assuredly, I know also what it is to take the same view with conscious unpreparedness, and unresisted worldly tastes and feelings. The deepest wish of my soul has been, never again to feel what I have experienced of this nature. On this account, and not from Phariseism, or a dictatorial spirit, I have deliberately taken a narrower path than many (even of the well-disposed) think expedient. Acting thus, however, with all my heart, I have not hesitated to say that I did so. I will not deny that it was my wish to inspire you in particular with my own feeling. Why? Because there was no degree of safety or comfort, now, or at the hour of death, to which I could myself aspire, which I did not earnestly wish you to partake. I can truly say, that there is none on earth of whose everlasting salvation, and present inward happiness, I have been more earnestly and unremittingly desirous, than of yours. And as there is nothing that I should so much dread for myself, as any, the minutest, compromise with the spirit of the world; so, undoubtedly, wherever I have imagined the shadow of a shade in you, which gave room for jealousy on that ground, my whole soul has been alive to do what in me lay to avert

the possibility of danger. You have now the full explanation of that feeling of mine to which you allude. And, “whatever you may think,” I shall be most happy to know that you actually view these matters in the same light with myself.

I must only add, that

I am, my dear Madam, ever cordially
and affectionately yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO LADY ———.

MY DEAREST LADY,

Cashel, Sept. 18, 1815.

* * * It would seem to be the providential end of sects, to rouse the profligate, to impress the thoughtless, to sustain individual weakness by a co-partnership of powers; and to employ, in support of religion, whether personal or social, those tastes and passions of human nature which are strongest in its least refined state; and, in proportion as civilisation advances, give place to higher likings, and nobler sensibilities. I am satisfied that, without such a provision, Christianity must have perished through the fewness of its votaries. But I am no less assured that, if it had relied on the sectarian system alone, there would have been extension, without excellence; instances of sincerity, but few, if any, examples of maturity; an occasional occurrence of conversions, but no adequate means of perfecting the convert, nor, of course, of training the youthful candidate.

To meet these more exalted purposes, the Church of Christ was stamped with an hierarchical

character, from its commencement : and, through the growing influence of this inherent principle, the Church universal soon manifested those features (in substance) which at this day distinguish the Church of England from the various self-erected fraternities which have dissented from her communion. The sobriety of fixed forms and regulated services ; the dignified impressiveness of festival celebrations ; an order of things fitted, not for producing alarm or ecstasy, but for working noiselessly yet powerfully, gently yet effectually, by endearing associations, and deep attraction, on the interior springs of human nature, and the central feelings of the heart :—by means such as these, Christian piety was sustained, and human character raised to its height, through a series of at least twelve centuries : and when, at length, reformation became necessary, it pleased Providence that, in our favoured portion of the Catholic Church, the substance of ancient devotion should be as steadily retained, as more recent disfigurements were condemned and rejected.

Whatever, therefore, has been aimed at, or attained to, by the purest minds and most exalted spirits for, I may simply say, eighteen hundred years, is compendiously brought together in our public services, for us to study, aspire to, and imbibe. There is, here, no “doubtful disputation,” no perplexing dogma, no illusive consolation, no heart-damping gloominess : on the contrary, a set of feelings are presented to us, which imply health of mind, renovation of heart, victory over the world, effectual self-dominion, purest self-enjoy-

ment, filial access to our God, vital union with our Redeemer, strength, guidance, and consolation from the Eternal Spirit, unlimited growth in grace,—purity, spirituality, faith, hope, and love, becoming, as it were, our natural habits; the rest above anticipated, in cloudless contemplation of things invisible; and our path through life becoming more and more brightened with the dawning of celestial day. Such, evidently, are the objects brought before us in the Sunday morning-service of our Church; and, on this ground, I conclude that no contrivances for edification which have come to our knowledge, are comparable with that modest unpretending means (I would almost say) of anticipatory beatification, which is thus entailed on the members of our communion by the distinguishing favour of Providence.

Were this last paragraph to come before the public, I am aware I should be thought by many to be giving an eulogium from my own heated fancy; but I have deeply thought of what I am saying. I have been, myself, on the stretch for happiness from my earliest days; and since it pleased God to free me from the bondage of worldly pleasures, I have been, I may say, only the more a mental epicure. Yet never have my tastes for happiness been more truly in their element, than when I could unite my whole mind and heart with the heavenward current of our public services. In the sacred Scripture, alone, do I find a profounder or serener depth; and if, in any respect, I make my way into this latter, I feel that, under God, I owe it to my having been

so cordially conversant, and, I trust I may add, so intimately made acquainted, with that next best vehicle of the wisdom from above.

The superior tendency of the hierarchical church to deepen piety, when the germ has once been planted, might be further illustrated by a comparative view of what is respectively held by both parties concerning the sacraments. I mean the low notions almost universally received on this subject by sects, and the higher ideas common to the early Catholic Church and our own. But this would be matter for a treatise, rather than for part of a letter like this: I must, therefore, be silent on the point, and merely advert to what I intimated above,—that our acquaintance with the deficiencies of sectarian religion, may be made use of, not for our own instruction only, but for the benefit of those who may be liable to suffer from such deficiencies, when persons of this description come accidentally in our way.

I simply mean that, in all our intercourse of this nature, we should studiously yet wisely endeavour to turn the stream of conversation to subjects of the most inward and practical kind; urging them, however, on such grounds, and supporting them by such considerations, as shall be least likely to awaken a controversial idea. It may be possible to make persons feel that they are practically deficient, when it would be hopeless to convince them that they are theologically mistaken. Our ordinary duty, therefore, is to lead attention, as far as in our power, to the practical points, and avoid the theological.

With persons professedly of the Established Church we may the more easily pursue this plan; since all we have to do, is to advert to, and dwell upon, passages in the Common Prayer Book. There is scarcely a single collect which does not present some feature or movement of interior Christianity; and, in not a few, the radical principles of the spiritual life are condensed into a few sentences. Those, therefore, who acknowledge the general excellence of our prayers, but probably have not yet weighed their actual import, nor, of course, felt their force, cannot, perhaps, be put on a better line of improvement, than that of studying and digesting the expressions in which they statedly address God; and which, being so used, ought above every thing to be the language of their hearts. In this way, I conceive it likely that more exalted ideas of piety might be inoffensively placed in view, where the disclosure of our sentiments, in our own words, might rouse jealousy and provoke opposition.

I purposed saying something about the Appendix to Mr. Jebb's Sermons; but I must defer that matter to another time. I will now merely assure you, that its object was far deeper than the exciting of doubts about the Bible Society. That it might, to a thinking mind, manifest such a tendency, I can well imagine; and there was certainly no wish to preclude such an application. But any direct controversy with the Bible Society (let the writers of the Appendix think on the subject as they may) was perfectly out of view. I myself can certainly take no part in the Bible

Society ; chiefly, I acknowledge, on the very grounds set forth in that Appendix : but I have not the slightest wish to enter the lists against it. On the contrary, I am desirous to see it go on to the end of its course, and accomplish all that it can. It is, in my view, a most interesting experiment ; and though I am inclined to think that it will not, in any respect, answer the purpose of its originators, it will assuredly serve some deep purpose of overruling Providence ; for the sake of which, I should humbly think, the impulse was at first given, and the movements so long sustained, and so surprisingly extended.

Be assured that you and your family have the warmest and most affectionate wishes which can be formed by,

My dearest Lady, your faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Cashel, Oct. 10, 1815.

THE kind mention you make of me in your letter to Mr. Jebb will not suffer me to delay expressing to you my unfeigned and cordial gratitude. If my image had been beginning to fade from your recollection, it would have been, at least, my apparent desert ; and, in truth, my self-reproach would be more than I could easily endure, were I not honestly conscious that nothing could be more opposite to all my feelings than any thing approaching to wilful omission.

I hope you will shortly receive a very small evidence, that this last expression of your kindness (much as I feel it) was not necessary to awaken my affectionate remembrance. Mr. Ogilvie has been so good as to take charge of a little volume for your acceptance, though its preface alone entitles me to put it into the hands of my friends. With the rest of its contents you are already perfectly acquainted; and I merely indulge a hope that the little matter which I have prefixed, will not, in your judgment, lessen the general value.

What events have taken place since I last had the pleasure of writing to you! How highly has Britain been honoured! and yet how awfully has all undue exultation been repressed by the critical turn which, after all, effected a prosperous conclusion. It was not human wisdom which wrought our deliverance: for, when policy (as well as prowess) had done its utmost, Buonaparte's return from Elba seemed at once to undo all that had been accomplished. It was not human power; for at Waterloo the prize was as much as ever to be contended for; and, notwithstanding all that had been achieved, the fate of Europe once more trembled on the balance. Never, surely, did so momentous and vital a contest terminate at once so happily and so instructively.

I am deeply gratified by your approbation of my friend Jebb's volume of Sermons. There is no other person upon earth in whose success, as a public instructor, I am so much interested: and I am delighted at his being so encouraged;

because that which would make others vain, is necessary to sustain and animate his unpretentious and over-sensitive mind. I trust he will be induced to proceed in publishing, as I am confident he will improve; and, I would fain hope, will, at length, as much outdo his present productions, as these excel common compositions.

One thing has tended, and will still more deeply tend, to heighten the worth of my friend Jebb's writings, — namely, his drawing from the stores of his own heart. It is his supreme ambition to feel, first, for himself, whatever he is to offer for the edification of others. In his view, theology is a Divine chemistry, which can be understood only by being studied in the laboratory of the heart. It is this, I am persuaded, more than any other cause, which gives to Jebb's Sermons that raciness, the want of which is the grand defect in so many modern works on religious subjects.

I must say no more, otherwise my letter could not go by this day's mail; and I should be sorry to lose the advantage of the good company with which, by being thus despatched, it will have the honour of reaching your hand. With kindest remembrances to the ladies, and especially to Mrs. Martha,

I am, my dear Madam, ever most gratefully
and most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Bellevûe, May 30, 1805.*

I, AT length, resolve to write a few lines to you, though my thoughts are occupied with an object which greatly interests me; and I have a nervous headach of a kind to which, of late, I have been wonderfully unaccustomed; and, therefore, I am now a little depressed by it, lest it should be symptomatic of relapse into some degree of former illnesses.

I will first tell you what I am engaged in. I am, in short, then, defending some of your friends against an anonymous pamphleteer. * *

Their lordships may, after all, give me but little thanks for my pains; but I think the question, just now, requires some opening. High Church fulminations have been too long dealt round the land; and, I am afraid, even some pious clergymen think that they too must echo, at least in some degree, the sounds that issue from those ecclesiastical Salmoneuses. It is, therefore, my wish to do what in me lies, both to silence gainsayers, to confirm those that are right, and to shew to those that err without intending it, a more excellent way. I am, at this very time, in a most interesting part of my little work; and that will lead me to say less to you than I should be otherwise disposed to do.

How glad I am you sent a set of the "Hints"

* By a mistake, this letter has not been inserted in the order of its date.

to my friend here. I suppose you feel yourself now quite detected; every body having, I understand, named you as the author. How could it be otherwise? Those who could read would identify the style; and those who could not read would be struck with the resemblance, in page, and letter, and entire appearance, to your "Strictures" and Works. I am credibly informed that, on the day of its appearing, Hatchard said to a number of gentlemen in his shop, "You, gentlemen, judge by the inside of books; I judge by their outside; and, looking at this book, I say, Hannah More." You have been confidently named to me and others in letters from England; so that, on the whole, you must, by this time, be inured to the imputation; and I cannot but desire to know how you feel under it. There are some deplorable errata; there are, also, several matters which, if I had seen them before going to press, I should have remarked upon. For instance, I would not have given an applausive epithet to Absalom and Achitophel without a strong drawback; it being so vile in its commencement, and so filthily indelicate in some one or more instances. I would, also, have sacrificed some good sayings, rather than have quoted South so often; and by no means would I have called him "admirable." I humbly think, too, that Hooker need not have been called "incomparable." He was a very great man as to learning, and power of reasoning and eloquence; but "incomparable" is a broad, rather, indeed, an unlimited, word. I almost suspect that he laboured much to little

purpose. Such large books as his do, in general, little execution : his temper, in his letter about Walter Travers, seems not the best : and his divinity, as manifested in his shorter discourses, appears to me not well digested : though, certainly, there are very noble passages, both in these and in his " Polity." But, in genius, could he be compared to Jeremy Taylor ? Or have we any such proofs of elevated piety in him, as we have of Herbert's ? My conviction is, that the fate of the Established Church will finally rest on one ground,—its tendency to cherish the religion of the heart, by preparing the mind for it, by giving just views of it, and by aiding progress in it. When it comes to be tried by this test, such specimens as Herbert, Hammond, or Leighton, will do more to serve it than ten " Ecclesiastical Politics." I could mention many other matters ; but I must now refrain.

Your omissions in what you had from me were quite what I wished you to do. But I should have endeavoured to argue you out of some of the additions ; they not being, as I conceive, in my order of theological architecture. But, on this subject, I have no disposition to tease you. I love my own views for many reasons ; and for this, among others,—that they do not dispose me to be over eager in urging them ; or to be much pained when I am a little thwarted in them. I trust you do not doubt my love to the Established Church : but it is not for its doctrines I love it. I prize some single collects above all the theological Articles. In my judgment, what will make the Church of

England live, is, that it has adopted and embodied, with singularly happy selection, the sublime piety of the primitive Church. This is done in the Liturgy. In its Articles, it draws its materials, as I conceive, from later times; and speaks (though wonderfully moderated) that theological language which commenced with St. Austin. This, I own, had its use; has served important purposes in the Christian Church; and, perhaps, was adopted by our Reformers on strong grounds of expediency. But, abstractedly, I, for myself, much prefer the Liturgy to the Articles: the latter being, in my mind, very much human; the former, little short of divine. The one, I conceive, partakes much of that "knowledge which will vanish away;" the other, of that "love that never faileth." Were we now talking together, and could we go into particulars, I should not despair of making this very clear to your candid and intelligent mind.

I need not observe to you, that, when I deprecate doctrines, I mean not any Catholic verity; such as the Universal Church holds in common. I only mean what some consider as the grand distinguishing marks of Protestantism, as well as the chief ornaments of our Church; but which I am obliged to deem quite unessential to the former; and, as tolerable, rather than laudable, in the latter: tolerable, because, by the limited language which has been used, the passages in question admit of a more latitudinous meaning than some are willing to allow of; and, by that latitude, a consistency is preserved with the Liturgy; and freedom of conscience secured for those to whom

St. Austin's and Luther's divinity has appeared questionable.

What countenances this last (Luther's divinity), is, on the whole, what I like least : though I do not know, indeed, which is less captivating,—Luther's idea of justification by faith alone, or Austin's idea not only of ingrained (which, in a sober sense, is, doubtless, just), but of invincible depravity; invincible even by Divine grace. The former leaned towards in the eleventh Article; the latter, in the latter part of the ninth. I say leaned towards, for I do not think that either, of strict necessity, requires the meaning which zealous theorists would put upon them. The idea of those theorists is, that God, in justifying, looks at the merit of Christ alone; and has no respect to any moral quality in the subject: and that, therefore, grace justifies, not as a moral grace wrought in us by the Spirit, and having an aptitude to God's gracious purpose, because of its essential suitableness to our moral restoration, but merely as the medium of discovering to us God's mercy in Christ. And their notion of the regenerate state is brought down to the level of the character described in the 7th of Romans. In both, they think themselves countenanced by the language in those Articles. And the scheme thus made up, together with all its attendant members, they call the doctrines of the Church of England. Now, I am persuaded, that (however these views might be indulged) they were not adopted by the Reformers: and, I conceive, the Liturgy gives quite other views; I mean higher and more moral views. I, therefore,

acknowledge I much more relish the spirit, temper, and devotional sentiment of the Established Church, than any thing that can be thus called its doctrines. I love what identifies it with the Church Universal, rather than what distinguishes it as a particular establishment.

I cannot but think, that dwelling so much on those equivocal tenets which are alluded to in the Articles, is, at this very time, materially obstructing the progress of the genuine light of truth. The importance which is given to what is called the doctrine of justification by faith, and the above-mentioned strange explanation of it, which is so strenuously insisted on, tend, in my mind, to revolt serious and sensible men from spiritual religion. They cannot comprehend that God's acceptance of penitents should depend, in no respect, on their moral character; or that he should approve of the persons of believers, before He has made them inwardly righteous. There is such an essential severing of God's favour from His essential love of goodness, in this view, as can never be understood by plain minds; and, I should think, could hardly be relished by unsophisticated minds. Yet, they who insist on this strange theory are perpetually quoting the Articles to support it. And these, too, are they who talk most zealously about the doctrines of the Church.

Indeed, I must truly say, that to make the doctrines of the Church of England a chief subject of praise, is scarcely consistent on any other ground than that on which I have been animadverting. For what does one mean by such praise,

but to do honour to some peculiar excellencies? Praise is not given to an individual for that which implies no distinction above others. At least, therefore, when the Church is praised for its doctrines, those cannot be meant which it holds in common with the Church of Rome. What, then, are those doctrinal points in which it differs from the Romish Church? Not merely the gross superstitions which all Protestants reject, because such rejection is too essential to a Protestant Church, to be matter of praise to any one in particular. It must be something more specific which is meant to be praised. I take, then, the matter of praise to resolve itself into those aforementioned doctrines; which, as I have already intimated, I think the least entitled to praise of all that the Church presents to us. In short, I think the Church is far more entitled to praise for those things which it holds in common with Roman Catholics, than it can be for any thing polemical, or distinctive (except the rejection of practical errors). And, respecting the very points in debate, I doubt whether the Church of Rome has not the more strictly sound views of the two. I doubt really whether, on the point of justification, the Romish language is not much more scriptural and rational, as it involves in that term not the mere accounting, but also the making righteous; which, when ascribed solely to Divine grace, is so far from being, in my mind, an erroneous idea, that I think the scriptural meaning of justification strictly requires it.

If I have made myself intelligible, it is well;

but I greatly fear I may not. I wished, if I could (not to urge my sentiments on you), but to explain why I dislike talking of the doctrines of the Church. I must, however, add one more remark. There is a propriety in praising the devotional forms of the Church, which cannot be alike extended to the doctrines, for this reason ;—because doctrines are either true or false, which are qualities that are absolute, and do not admit of degrees; there being, strictly speaking, no such thing as more or less true, or more or less false. The mode of expression, indeed, may admit of degrees of clearness, fulness, &c., and therefore might deserve praise. But it is scarcely ground for praise that a thing is true; because, to be otherwise is to be stark naught. But forms of devotion admit of various degrees of excellence; up from “God be merciful to me a sinner,” even to the songs of archangels and of the elders round the throne. Here praise may be deserved by high degrees of excellence; and is, therefore, strictly appropriate. On this single account, then, were there no other, I would not have mingled praise of doctrines with praise of the Liturgy; far less have given more praise to what, at best, could be but true, than to what is, amongst many competitors, hitherto beyond all parallel. It may yet, no doubt, be enriched in some of its parts; but, I persuade myself, its plan and substance may probably be one day the model for the public worship of the Christian world.

Forgive me, my dear madam, this effusion. But I really wish you to understand me. Least

of all, do I wish for any particular answer. If I am wrong, you may let me be wrong; for you have charity enough to believe the error of little practical moment.

There are one or two other instances, in which I might possibly have succeeded with you more easily; but I must not now say any thing about them.

How predictively you talk about your (now noble) friend! You, however, probably conceive of me as going further on that subject than I do in reality. I think every thing is right to which God's providence leads one; but I am persuaded we are ever in danger when we, in any instance, outrun Providence. To make this discrimination, however, requires so indispensably that "single eye," which our Saviour speaks of, that I fear the happy rightness of place and employment may not be very common even among good people; the more so as, even with the sincerest purpose, the limitedness of human foresight leaves room for error upon error.

Farewell, my dear Madam, and believe me

Your ever faithful and affectionate Friend and Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MR. S.

No date [supposed 1815, or 1816.]

* * * I should have pleasure in directing your attention to books, if I knew any which did common justice to the subject. The fear of

Popery has inspired writers of reformed communions with so cold a caution on this (of all others) most animating point, as deplorably to preclude adequate means of excitement or edification. Happily, we have two rallying points,—what is said in Scripture, and what is contained in our own formularies; but both require expansion; and, as yet, I know not any one who has expanded either to purpose.

My own idea of the Lord's Supper is made up from these two sources, considering the one as primary, the other subordinate: I ought to add, regarding the one as strictly Divine, the other (our formularies) as not merely human: for, having been preserved, and in different instances very curiously modified, in ways far above common contingency, I consider our formularies as singularly marked by the hand of Divine Providence, and as, therefore, affording a more than human (a subordinately Divine) guidance on the points to which they apply.

Thus aided, then, in my view of the Lord's Supper, I regard it as the peculiar act of Christian worship; the import of which concentrates every thing which concerns us, either as immortal, or as morally diseased intelligences. Our blessed Saviour, as God manifest in the flesh, represents himself as a fountain of influence, alike powerful to reanimate the human spirit as supposed in a state of moral death, and to nourish it when reanimated with all that tends to everlasting wellbeing. The sacred text of the New Testament,—eminently the four Gospels, and supereminently the Gospel of St.

John,—places this great object before us descriptively, so as to afford inexhaustible matter of reflection, contemplation, and devotion. But the very nature of influence requires not explanation or exhibition only, but actual communication. Food does not sustain, water does not quench, wine does not cheer, by being looked at or thought about, but by being actually received, and united with our system. The fact, then, of a source of Divine influence, required a medium of communication; and that medium is, by Divine appointment (and, consequently, by infallible Divine operation), the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

To understand, then, the great end of the Lord's Supper, we must rightly apprehend the great object of the Gospel. This is not merely to teach us (the Old Testament had done this), but to animate, dispose, and strengthen us. Christianity supposes duty known, and even an imperfect desire for internal as well as for external rectitude. The Gospel meets this desire. Godhead presents itself in human nature, in order to draw to itself, through human sympathy as well as through Divine energy, our predominant affection. It places itself in that light, and shews itself in that form, most exquisitely fitted to penetrate all the depth, to concentrate all the capacity, and to engage all the susceptibility, of the human mind and heart. Every point in our Saviour's life is thus powerful, and thus attractive. But his death is the central point in which every thing which belongs to Him as man and as God, as humiliated and as glorified (because it is the point which terminated the one,

and transferred Him to the other), is brought into convergement. As a subject of thought, therefore, it is the fountain head of Divine philosophy ; for it realised all the excellence which the brightest heathen sages had ever fancied. But, as an act of God incarnate, intended for endless use, it is infinitely more : it is an object whose transcendently rational force is made divinely omnipotent, by the energy of Godhead, ever in readiness to carry the natural aptitude supernaturally into the mind and heart. Of this supernatural influence, then, I consider the Lord's Supper the divinely constructed conduit : it is the connecting link between earth and heaven, the point where our Redeemer is vitally accessible, " the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." When he said, " This is my body," and " This is my blood," he made this sacrament, the simple elements (which, whenever thus used, receive anew the same Divine touch, and the same efficacious sublimation), to be for ever the vehicles, to all capable receivers, of all that is vitalising, sanative, purificatory, consolatory, confirmative, in himself,—in his life or in his death, his exquisite humanity or his adorable divinity.

He, therefore, who comes to the Lord's Supper, has two points to consider,—his own spiritual wants, (whether diseases, weaknesses, or even something like spiritual death itself), and our Redeemer's correspondent fulness. St. John could not more strongly describe the noblest privilege of himself, and his fellow Apostles, than by saying, *Ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν.*—In what other way could the beautiful idea of the Platonist

be so realised, "*Felix qui potuit boni fontem visere lucidum ?*" The Lord's Supper, therefore, perpetuates the apostolic privilege; and, I would with reverence add, substantiates the lovely Platonic vision. Do I desire real virtue, true goodness, genuine mental liberty, safety from contamination while here, sure admission to happiness hereafter? This is the question for the young communicant to ask; for if he feels this holy desire, the Lord's Supper is the presence-chamber where the Redeemer waits to gratify his wish; to do, by his mystical touch, all that for souls which he once did for bodies; yea, to do infinitely more; the blessing which he supernaturally communicates in the Eucharist, to those who are capable of receiving it, being, as far as it is, in the nature of things, communicable, the virtuality of Himself.

I trust I have spoken intelligibly. As to reading, I should think the Gospels themselves, the Epistle to the Philippians, and that to the Hebrews, afford by much, and above all that I could name, the best matter for preparatory meditation.

FROM THE SAME TO LADY —.

MY DEAREST LADY,

March 2, 1816.

I RECEIVED your letter in my bed; but, I thank God, I am now pretty well. I do not think the subject you propose to me uninteresting; because, in my judgment, it has more in it than has been generally adverted to. There is, no doubt, in

St. Mark's account, an apparent inconsistency; but an attention to the nature of the case clears up the difficulty. Had the tree been productive, there must, at that time, have been figs upon it, though they might not have been perfectly ripe; for the nature of the fig-tree, in those climates, is to put forth its fruit before the full opening of its leaves. The tree, therefore, being in full foliage, was a reason why fruit was to be expected: and the words of St. Mark do not make this expectation unreasonable; but, on the contrary, establish its justness; for "the season of figs" must mean the time of their full ripeness, when they are actually gathered in. Had, then, this time come, the tree might have been without fruit, not because it was fruitless, but because its fruit had been gathered: so that, on the whole, nothing could be more consistent with fact, than the taking for granted that a fig-tree, then in leaf, would afford figs of some kind or other; and, consequently, the notion of injustice, or of unfounded malediction, is strictly and self-evidently inadmissible.

But still it may be asked, why did the meek Redeemer exercise this singular sort of anger towards a senseless vegetable? The answer to this has generally been, that our Lord thus typically exemplified the doom ready to descend on the nation of the Jews; this signification of our Saviour's act is thought to be supported by the parable of the barren fig-tree, of the meaning of which there can be no question; while, between the matter of that parable and the present transaction, there is a resemblance, which may be

thought to intimate their reference to the same thing.

I confess, I think our Lord did this act with a different intention. Until that moment He had never exercised his Divine power, except in deeds of mercy. His omnipotence had been variously manifested; but, in every instance, for the relief of man,—in no instance for his punishment. It is remarkable this had not been the case with the ancient Prophets; they, in almost every instance, had been the ministers of vengeance, as well as of benediction; and it is evident that the Apostles themselves did not understand why, on like occasions, their Divine Master should not have recourse to the same severity. Thus, when refused hospitality by the Samaritans, James and John say, “Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and destroy them, even as Elias did?” In these words they shew clearly what they imagined would have become the promised Messiah. His answer could not but silence them; it is, however, morally certain, that it did not convince them. Their thirst for worldly greatness, which continued to the last moment of our Lord’s life, must have been accompanied by other congenial feelings; and, among the rest, by a persuasion that power, when really possessed, would, on fit occasions, be exerted vindictively, as well as beneficently.

Against this prejudice, then, so natural,—rather, indeed, so unavoidable,—in their immature circumstances, it accorded with all our Lord’s conduct towards them, to furnish them with suitable sup-

port. A moment was just at hand when error, in this particular instance, suffered to act without any corrective, might have sunk their temporary depression into complete apostasy. If they had thought it became our Lord to punish the inhospitable Samaritans, how much more must the same persuasion have possessed them, when they saw him, as if he had been a weak mortal, taken by violence, in order to be subjected to every possible indignity and cruelty ? In such circumstances, how could they have escaped the supposition that their Master, instead of being above, was far below the ancient Prophets ? they having had the power of defending themselves against the greatest earthly adversary ; whereas, when an equal necessity of self-defence occurred, in the instance of their Master, powerful as he had been in assisting others, to all appearance he wanted the power of protecting himself. I say, then, this pernicious misapprehension was, by some means or other, to be precluded. But, how ? The power of our Lord to do much more than Elijah had done, not merely to implore fire from heaven, but to strike dead with a word, could not have been manifested on man, without departure from his unvaried graciousness ; he would not shew this power on an inferior animal, after having pleaded with Jonah, in behalf of the cattle of Nineveh ; as he also staid his holy anger, when he overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them who sold doves ;—stopping, as it were, at that point, lest, by any means, the doves should be hurt ;—and, therefore, merely saying, “ Take these things hence ”—

they, of course, being either tied, or in dove-cotes, and, consequently, not able, like the sheep and oxen, to shift for themselves. Severity, therefore, towards any thing which had feeling, was not in unison with his errand on earth. And yet, for the purpose of affording due support to the minds of the Apostles in their approaching trial, it might be indispensable for him to shew that his power to save was not greater than his power to destroy.

What course, then, does the wise and gracious Saviour pursue? He exemplifies to the senses of his Apostles, on a senseless vegetable, what he was able to do, by a word, against all the created powers in the universe. A more impressive evidence could not have been given. There stood the tree, which, until our Lord spoke, had been in full verdure, now blighted and lifeless, amidst the richness of surrounding vegetation. It was an image which could not but fix itself; which never could be effaced in their minds. Even, therefore, when, shortly after, they should see their Master taken as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before his shearers, the recent evidence of their senses would compel them to acknowledge, that it was his own supreme will alone which kept him, for one moment, in that humiliated state; and that, if he saw good, his persecutors, from the highest to the lowest, would, in the twinkling of an eye, have fallen before him, as lifeless as the blasted fig-tree.

This, I humbly conceive, was the chief object of this singular miracle. The occasion, as I have said, would seem to warrant our thinking that something

of the kind was needful; and certainly, for such a purpose, a more suitable expedient could not be imagined. I would observe, too, that, in this view of the transaction, a satisfactory light seems to be thrown on all its circumstances. The supposition of such a design would account for our Lord going up to examine the fig-tree, which, in his instance, omniscient as he was, seemed so superfluous. But, if we may venture to speak so, it was our Lord's manner to appear most human when he was about to do something most divine. Thus, when he is on the point of laying open to herself the criminal life of the woman at the well of Sychar, he prefaces his disclosure with the speech of a seemingly ignorant person, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither:" words, however, proved by the sequel, to have been exquisitely fitted for introducing, with equal delicacy and poignancy, the astonishing statement which immediately followed. Thus, also, when our Lord was preparing to work one of his most remarkable miracles, the multiplying of the loaves and fishes, he asks one of his Apostles, as if he himself were apprehensive of difficulty, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" A question instantly explained to us by the Evangelist; "This he said to prove him, for He himself knew what He would do." These two passages are, in my mind, a key to much said and done by our Lord in the course of his ministry; and particularly to the introductory circumstance of the case now before us. That our Lord was hungry, was, no doubt, a fact; but it was clearly not to satisfy his hunger that he went to the fig-tree.

He intended to work an impressive miracle, at the fittest time; and he adopted the method which is related by the Evangelist, as the fittest for his purpose.

I must add no more, in order to send what I have written by this night's mail. I rejoice to know that you are all well.

Believe me, my dearest Lady,

Ever most cordially yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dawson Street, Dublin,
April 22 and 23, 1816.

I WAS writing the letter which accompanies this, when your kind letter, subjoined to that to Mrs. La Touche, reached me. Your goodness to me will make you feel pleasure, in learning from myself that I have passed a better winter than for the last three years. My friend Jebb also has been much better than usual. I sincerely regret that you have so different an account to give of yourself, and my sincerely valued friend, Mrs. Martha. I trust the advancing season will bring sensible amendment to you both: the commencements of which, I persuade myself, you are already experiencing, from your near prospect of breaking prison.

A visit to Barley-wood would, of itself, be a powerful inducement to my crossing the Channel. But, alas! how many are the hindrances! I thank God, I enjoy great bodily ease. I am as free as the most robust from actual pain; and, on the

whole, suffer little sickness. Still, I am an invalid. And I feel that I am so, in nothing more than in a shrinking from that which was my highest earthly pleasure—travelling. I might, however, surmount this obstacle, if it were the only one. But my poor friend, Miss Fergusson, is more deeply an invalid than myself. I think with wonder, how well she has escaped, with extreme care (and by the mercy of God), during the last twelve months. But, that care was enjoined by two or three such alarming illnesses, as have made the interval she has now enjoyed, only the ground of a certain degree of hope; so slight a matter has brought on those former terrible attacks. I should, therefore, be afraid of her travelling; and (until I have more confidence) unwilling to be long absent, or far distant from her. Added to this consideration, I have another strong one. My friend, at Bellevûe, by being determinately stationary, makes me form by sympathy a like determination. That is, simply, while my dear Mr. La Touche remains on earth, I cannot harbour the thought of leaving him for so long as a visit to England would require. There is, I really believe, no man on earth except his own brother (who is some years older than Mr. P. L., and now a sufferer through a distressing, but very slow decline), whom he loves more cordially than myself; and I am sometimes so vain as to think that there is scarcely any thing he enjoys so much as my conversation. I have the great pleasure of adding, that the more directly religious it is, he relishes it the better. This being the case, I feel my friend's comfort a service to which I am bound

to devote myself. And, in truth, every feeling of my heart rivets me to my dear old friend; who, during thirteen years, has never looked at me but with attachment and affection. I fear infirmities are coming upon him; but his sound intellect and good taste are wonderfully unimpaired. And, though it is quite a matter of doubt whether he may yet remain for some years, or sink under a sudden stroke, such is his disposition, that I can leave him unreservedly in the hands of the great Benefactor, with confidence that whatever takes place will be best for himself.

My invaluable friend, Mrs. La Touche, could in no way be so much gratified as by a successful attempt to please and interest Mr. L. I feel, therefore, inexpressible pleasure in being able to afford satisfaction, by what is, in itself, a high gratification, to two as precious friends as this world could furnish. I say, in itself a high gratification: for to converse with a man of more than eighty, who is able to exercise not only sound sense, but remarkable acuteness and nice discernment, on whatever subjects; and who has all his kind and unselfish feelings as much alive in him as they could have been at five-and-twenty, with the addition of that noblest of all principles, which had not then come into operation: to converse, I say, with such a person, is an absolute delight. I used always to feel it such in the instances of John Wesley and Doctor Maclaine; the only persons whom I have ever known, that I can bring into comparison with Mr. Peter La Touche.

I have gone into these particulars, lest you should think me insensible to attractions, which I should be unworthy if I did not feel: and to which, in truth, were I otherwise circumstanced, it would be high pleasure to yield myself. There are only two other places, beside my own "quiet resting place," where I have been so happy as under your roof; namely, the Archbishop of Cashel's, and Bellevûe. I say this unfeignedly; and, in so saying, I say as much as words can convey. There is a chilliness in my constitution, which requires to be chafed by the warm hand of kindness. What I met at Barleywood fitted to my case, I might almost say, glows in my recollection.

A loss has been lately sustained in the La Touche family; which was matter of affliction not to them only, but to as extensive a circle as ever united in lamenting a private calamity. Lady Emily La Touche, wife of Mr. Robert La Touche (nephew of our friend, Mr. Peter), and sister of the Earl of Clancarty, who has for a good while been our ambassador at the court of Belgium; was married about five years ago, or a little more, to one of the most opulent of his name. And, as she had been the darling of her own numerous and amiable family, she speedily endeared herself to her new connexions; so that no individual could have been the object of higher esteem, or more cordial affection. She was beautiful in her person; perhaps none was more so in this fair country: and with her fine features there was an expression of countenance which made it im-

possible to see her without interest and prepossession. I had little opportunity of knowing her until last summer, when she spent some days at Bellevûe, while I was there. I was delighted to perceive very speedily, that, fascinating as her external circumstances were, she had surmounted all their snares, and had devoted herself to the one great object with such determined cordiality, such unreserved simplicity, and, at the same time, such discreet and temperate wisdom, as, I thought, I had never seen equalled in one of her age and station, nor outdone at any age or in any station. I felt as if my own happiness was increased by acquaintance with such a person; and I pleased myself with the hope of being reckoned among her friends.

About six weeks ago she was delivered of a son, with all the usual good appearances. Her physician thought her so well, that he sent her husband off to attend the assizes of his county. The third day, however, disagreeable symptoms shewed themselves; and in a few hours they became alarming. All means were used, but in vain. The case became hopeless; and it was pronounced that she could not live many hours. She was not herself immediately aware of her extreme danger; but, suspecting her situation, she sent, about six in the morning, for her physician, who slept in the house; and, after holding her arm to him that he might feel her pulse, she said (as he himself told me), with a steady voice and fixed look, "Doctor, tell me plainly, am I near my end? for I have a great

deal to say to Mr. La Touche, and I must receive the sacrament." His answer was, that she was certainly very weak; and that the sooner she did whatever she wished to do, the better. Her husband was forthwith called (who had been brought back by express), and she spent more than half an hour in giving him her dying counsels respecting his own future conduct, and the religious education of her children. Her brother, the Bishop of Elphin, who was also in the house, was then called, and, after some conversation, was desired by her to proceed, without delay, to administer the Lord's Supper. The physician assured me that, in his life, he had never witnessed such a scene. The poor bishop, who is naturally warm in his feelings, and as attached as brother could be to his sister, performed the service with an emotion, and yet with an elevation (being touched, in spite of himself, with the Spirit that so sublimely calmed and animated the dying sufferer), which made the whole business appear more than human. The physician described the scene as awful beyond conception; while, he said, the lady herself was alone undepressed and unmoved. She said she had wished to live, had it been God's will, for the sake of her husband and children; but, as it was ruled otherwise, she resigned herself with unmixed acquiescence, and the most entire confidence. She had just time to say and do what she wished, and then ceased to breathe.

Mr. Robert Daly preached a charity sermon for our Female Orphan House on the Sunday following; and, in a part of his discourse which

urged religious education, he introduced the recently departed Lady Emily; and gave a sketch of her character and dying conduct (the former, from his own intimate acquaintance with her), which impressed his hearers as much as ever I witnessed.

Lady Emily's devotedness to religion was, probably, but of a few years' standing; and it seems to have been wholly, under God, the result of her own deep reflection. Her "first love" was never "left," nor abated: so that we may, with uncommon justice, say of her, in the language of the Book of Wisdom, "She pleased God, and was beloved of Him; so that, living among sinners, she was translated. Yea, speedily was she taken away, lest that wickedness should alter her understanding, or deceit beguile her soul: she, being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time."

It would be uncomfortable to turn from this subject to the disputations to which you refer; and which, I clearly see, are becoming more intense and impassioned. I should join you in grieving, were I not an inveterate optimist. I will only add,

Believe me always yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dublin, September 20, 21, 22, and 23.
[No other date.]

WHAT, by this time, may you think of me? I should assuredly think very ill of myself, if my

real neglect of your valuable correspondence, and invaluable friendship, were such as appearances might almost warrant you to suppose. The plain truth, strange as it may seem, is, that I have written many sheets from time to time, with an intention to send them, as letters, to you. But, in every instance, I have been so led on into a sort of dissertation, on one point or another, that uniformly I have been obliged to lay down my pen, as well from the difficulty of making my way fairly out of the subject I had gone into, as from the persuasion that, by engaging you in such reading, I was likely to tease much more than gratify you. Were it not for this last reason, I would transmit to you, with this (if even this shall escape the misfortune of its predecessors), a specimen of my attempts,—containing no less than seven sheets;—and yet this is but one. The matters which were at the time occupying my mind, stole out and got upon my paper almost before I was aware. And, having thus begun, I was induced to say something more to explain what I would be at, till, at length, I found myself in the density of a theological wood; into which, in due regard for your more practical taste, I could not think of introducing you. This is as plain a tale as ever was told; which, as I said, I could make yet plainer, if I had less value for your time, and less feeling for your patience.

Week after week have I wished to sit down and write you a simple short letter, were it only to express my gratitude for your kind letters to me. I may, most unfeignedly, say that my heart

longed to talk to you. But I am liable to a sort of mental nightmare, which strongly holds me back from the performance of many things which I most sincerely desire to do, and renders abortive many an attempt actually commenced; so that what Primate Usher said on his death-bed, I have painful reason to say almost continually—"Lord, forgive my sins of omission!"

My own apology to myself is, that I have but a feeble frame; which I am obliged to humour, for fear of worse consequences. And I even think that, during the last twelve months, my feebleness has increased; so that I feel as if I had, rapidly, become some years older. The cause, I suppose, is obstinate and increased biliousness; a complaint which seldom fails to affect the mind as well as the body. My spirits (I have much reason to be thankful) are not depressed; but, certainly, the activity of my mind is clogged. Whether I may yet grow better, or continue slowly to decline, I know not; but, I humbly trust, all will be exactly as it should be. And I hope that what disqualifies me for doing as much as I wish, will excite me to do what I can, from its being, thus, more sensibly felt that "the night cometh in which no man can work."

To you, my dear madam, what I have been last stating will have the force of an apology; for, doubtless, you can form too clear an idea of the case I describe. In addition to what I have said, I can most truly add, that, if thinking had the effect of writing, you would have heard from me times without number; for I do think of you, I do

believe, in the very manner that your own kind and honest heart would wish ; and, I dare say, I estimate you much above what your judgment of yourself would allow you to think reasonable. The truth is, that, if I had not the comfort of knowing you personally, I should be still attached to you most cordially, on account of some of the chapters in "The Strictures;" in which Divine Providence has made you a distinguished witness for strict and vital Christianity ; and that, in a manner, I conceive, very much peculiar to yourself. In fact, you seem to me to have said what the world greatly needed, but what, as far as I know, had not been said before. You have been enabled (as well as I can judge) to draw a boundary line through that tract of border ground that lies between the kingdoms of light and of darkness, with far more clearness on the one hand, and moderation on the other, than it had been done in former instances. The gregarious Christians, who form sects and societies, have been too severe, on the one hand ; and have, therefore, unduly (though, probably, for themselves, not unnecessarily) contracted the boundary. While the insulated Christians in Establishments, erring on the opposite side, through amiable, but excessive, liberality, have sometimes (perhaps rather generally) unduly enlarged it. The question was of deep importance, yet unsettled. If persons of cultivated minds and habits, on beginning to grow serious, should have fallen in with sectarian religionists, there was danger of their being discouraged and revolted ; if, with most of our well-disposed, even pious, established

divines, there was equal danger of their being misled into paths where ghostly thieves are ever lurking, to rob unwary travellers of their spiritual treasure. But you have been enabled to do much toward ascertaining the right path; more, as I said, than ever was done for the same class of inquirers. You have plainly told them what genuine Christianity requires, and will lead to. You have told them this strictly, yet cheerfully. It is the narrow path; but it is shewn to be the way of pleasantness, and the path of peace.

Forgive me for thus enlarging to yourself about your own writing. But *you* know it is not your own; and, therefore, you will patiently bear to have it brought before you. In my opinion, it deserves to be frequently recurred to by yourself, as a subject of uncommon thankfulness. For what greater honour can be conferred on a human being, than to be made the instrument of lastingly illuminating a path which, before, was equally dark and dangerous; or of closing perilous breaches in that wall which guards the high-way of holiness? I will only add, that I am merely giving vent to the thoughts which have possessed my mind habitually, ever since I read the chapters I allude to. And, as to my after acquaintance with yourself, allow me to say, simply, that I shall ever regard it as one of the great blessings and comforts for which I am bound to thank the all-gracious Benefactor.

But when will the world cease to refuse "the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely?" You may address them in one way; and I, as they

come in my way, may endeavour to address them in another (though, in matter, not another); yet still, still there is even in the most orderly, decorous, nay, in many respects, conscientious persons, a kind of heartfelt antipathy to spiritual piety, which neither good nature nor politeness can wholly repress. They will allow you the merit of sincerity; they will shew respect to your mental talents and acquirements: but, under all this, there is a deep-rooted grudge; because, if they allow you to be right, they own themselves to be wrong, in a matter which they just know enough of to be aware that it is of infinite moment.

I cannot tell how it is on your side of the water. With us, I think, this antipathy becomes more manifest than heretofore. The particulars I need not trouble you with; but I apprehend there are persons who consider you and your worthy friends, who have publicly taken the side of strict religion, and some of us here, as engaged, probably, they think, with many others, in a deep-laid plot for undermining and overturning the Church Establishment.

That the Church Establishment is, to all human appearance, likely to be undermined, is too true. But who are they that are bringing this about? Many, I must answer, in various ways. They, however, most effectually of all others, who confound vital religion with its abuses and counterfeits. Unfortunately, this has been, latterly, the method pursued by almost all who have come forward as the Church advocates; and we well know that its bitterest enemies would not wish for

more effective auxiliaries. The Church has, assuredly, many professed enemies,—never, probably, were such more multiplied than at present; but it is to our cold formalists and violent anti-fanatics that they are indebted both for number and strength. “I cannot but believe (said good Dr. Doddridge), that if the established clergy, and the dissenting ministers in general, were mutually to exchange their strain of preaching but for one year, it would be the ruin of our cause, even though there should be no alteration in the constitution and discipline of the Church of England.” I would not subscribe to this, verbatim, because I should look for a far better strain of preaching than has been practised (except in some very rare instances) by either: but, in substance, it is infinitely true; and the growing consequences of an opposite conduct more and more confirm it.

I grieve the more at this, because I see so little any where to counteract it. There are, I know, many sincerely pious clergymen: but, though they intend no such thing, I fear they help forward the evil. In fact, it seems to me that the Calvinistic turn, which prevails among serious clergymen, has an infallible tendency to increase dissenterism, by producing a taste which can find its full gratification only among Dissenters. The predilection for social, extemporaneous prayer, which seems to belong, more or less, to that whole class of Christians (however unwilling one might be to see it suppressed, till something better comes in its room), is, nevertheless, radically hostile to any liturgical service: and, I conceive, our Liturgy in

particular, from being so undoctinal, and so correspondent to the ancient models (in which there is no trace of the doctrinal views that Austin afterwards introduced), must be specially undervalued, if not disliked, in proportion as the tenets referred to become rooted. Add to this the painful fact, that when an evangelical minister (I use this term for want of other distinction) is succeeded by one of opposite sentiments, a detachment is almost sure to file off to the nearest Independent congregation.

In this state of things, it seems to me that we greatly need what, as yet, we have not,—a new race of divines, who will understand the Scriptures more clearly, and feel their efficacy more deeply and habitually, than any number that we have yet seen;—a race of discriminative teachers, who will combine the excellences that have hitherto been separate: the holiness and elevation of Smith and Cudworth, and their great predecessor, Chrysostom; with the deep views of converting grace taught by Austin,* and as yet seldom fully found except in his doctrinal followers. Till we have such a class of men, we shall not, I conceive, have true Church-of-England divines. For, in my mind, if there be now any where a specimen of such depurated and sublimated piety as I now speak of, it is in the Liturgy of the Established Church; consequently, it is only in such a description that the practical ideas which prevail in the Liturgy can be realised. In fact, we have, in our service, the piety, not of babes in Christ, but of

* I value Austin as much on account of his views of Divine grace, as I differ from him in his views of its matured effects.

full-grown men ; of those who, in St. Paul's sense, are spiritual ; not of those who are but carnal, (1 Cor. ii. 15 ; iii. 1.) There is a calm steadiness ; a lofty, but sober, rising of the soul (not the darting upward, which can be but transient ; but the actual dwelling "in regions mild, of calm and serene air") ; a living above "the sundry and manifold changes" of earth, by having "the heart surely fixed there where true joys are to be found." They, therefore, I conceive, alone, who either in part enjoy this blessed state of mind, or are intent upon attaining it, as a thing possible as well as invaluable,—the one thing needful,—they only can fully understand or relish our blessed Liturgy ; and, consequently, they only who impress these views in their teaching, can be the trainers of true children of the Church of England.

Dissenters suppose that their extemporary worship is a more spiritual worship than ours. I am ready to believe they are mistaken ; and that, on the contrary, supposing a like sincerity in the individual worshipper, their prayers have a less tendency than ours to cherish deep spirituality : there being in their devotions more of the animal feelings, such feelings will naturally be excited by them ; and too many will rest satisfied with these mixed emotions, as if they were genuine movements of piety, and symptoms of a state of grace. Experience, however, shews that there may be a great deal of such sensations, and very little moral progress. In our prayers, on the other hand, there are the sublimest, as well as the solidest, sentiments of piety ; but no stimulation. They

shew us exquisitely what we should feel ; but they have no temporary tendency to deceive us into a semblance of the feeling. They are food the most nourishing ; but unaccompanied with any thing serving to whet a languid taste. They are, therefore, most grateful to a mind whose spiritual appetite is as it ought to be : but where there is need for excitement, the deficiency, which is really in the mind, will too probably be imputed to the method of worship ; and the error will then only be detected, when that deeper piety, which forms the matter of our public prayers, is duly appreciated and aimed at.

I am far from intending to say, that the stimulative devotion of sects has not its use,—on the contrary, I think the Christian Church could hardly have been kept up without it : but it has evidently served to diffuse piety much more than to deepen it. It has been the continued means of bringing numbers, in every age, since the commencement of sects (which was about the ninth century), to a decided profession of strict religion, and to a useful mediocrity of piety. But it has seldom, I believe, produced full grown piety, except where peculiar circumstances co-operated. Other providential means have, therefore, been necessary for carrying piety to its height ; and I doubt whether these have not existed, even in the Church of Rome itself, more efficiently than in any (as far as we can judge) of the societies which conscientiously opposed it, previously to the Reformation : but since that era, I conceive, our Liturgy to have furnished, next to the Scripture itself, the

happiest provision for growth in grace, that the Christian world has yet seen. A Liturgy, as such, is suited to this purpose ; because it tends to discover those deficiencies in internal piety, which a more exciting mode of worship may very much conceal from those who join in it. But, in addition to this general utility, our Liturgy brings the great and glorious object itself continually before us ; it does justice to “ the prize of our high calling,” representing matured Christianity as it is — a heaven upon earth : and uniformly fixing our attention upon the kingdom of God within us, in the fullest and most perfect view of it ; and, besides, by presenting all this to us in the shape of prayer, it gives us the best instrumental aid possible for “ keeping all these things, and pondering them in our hearts.”

These properties of our established worship are surely no common blessings ; rather, I believe they are without parallel in either the ancient or modern Church : for, though the materials of our Liturgy were drawn from the various stores of primitive devotion, a selection equal to ours was, doubtless, never made before. And most seriously do I say, that, except in the sacred sources of truth, I know not where there is any thing like the consistent, pure, simple, consummate scheme of practical theology, which runs uniformly through the daily service, the Litany, the Collects (for the most part), the Communion Service, and the original Occasional Offices. The most excellent of the Fathers come nearest them, particularly Macarius, and the incomparable Chrysostom.

This, then, I humbly conceive, is the urgent desideratum, that there were a growing number, adequately impressed with these views, and cordially breathing this spirit. I must think such a set of spiritual labourers would be a new thing in the earth (for they would combine excellences, as I before observed, which hitherto, with rare exceptions, have appeared only apart); and not only our Church, but Christianity itself, would, I conceive, derive from them unexampled benefit. In such teachers, the highest spirituality would be united with the solidest rationality; and genuine philosophy would identify itself with the wisdom from above. By such interpreters, the Holy Scriptures, especially the Epistles of St. Paul, would be rescued from long, though not wilful misrepresentation; and that great Apostle would be clearly seen to have taught no doctrine but what his Divine Master taught before him; that is, the doctrine of a divinely imparted righteousness, and a practical faith, energetic through love.

This state of things, then, is what I desire, and feebly pray for: and, I doubt not, you (of whose substantial agreement with myself I always think with unfeigned pleasure) will cordially join in the same wishes. I trust, at some time or other, it cannot fail to take place: but may it not be accelerated? Our Lord's expressions imply that it may, when he says, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." Surely these words did not more apply to the times in

which they were spoken, than they do to this passing hour! Never did human beings seem more to need “a refuge from the storm, and a covert from the heat,” than at this strange period (as who can tell what may be impending?). And, of consequence, never was it more desirable that the only means of safety should be so directly and luminously seen, as to leave it in the power of all to have recourse to it. God grant that “his people” may no longer be “destroyed, for lack of knowledge.”

I must add no more on topics of this kind. As it is, I hope I shall not have tired you with my talk. They are subjects near my heart: and when I am once engaged, I find myself led on. But it has been my object not to entangle myself as before; and I will succeed, by breaking off.

I trust I need hardly tell you that I am always most cordially and faithfully

Your affectionate Friend and Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO LADY —.

MY DEAREST LADY,

March 20, 1817.

* * * I am sorry I cannot meet your wish to my own satisfaction. It is mysterious what a dearth of books there is, of the kind one would wish, and could imagine. What you ask for in the first instance, however, may be pointed out. No book, within my knowledge, at once so urgently and soberly puts forth the duties of a

clergymen as Burnet's "Pastoral Care." It is entirely but a small work; yet some parts of it are, doubtless, more weighty than others. I would make an attempt thus to discriminate, were it not that the titles of the several chapters in the table of contents, will be a surer guide to the taste and turn of the reader than any hint I could offer at such mere peradventure. I wish I could add to this a suitable series of subsequent reading. But, alas! we have no adequate guide to theological studies; nor any competent key to the understanding of Holy Scripture. Amid such penury of provision, the best thing to be done, is to fix on some writer who would give a safe specimen of the manner in which our religious interests ought to be apprehended and felt; and, in this view, I think the first seven or eight of Paley's sermons are peculiarly valuable. They are the latest thoughts of one of the coolest minds and strongest heads of the age in which he lived; and, without sanctioning excess, whether in belief or practice, they give evidence to truths which it is common to overlook, and not uncommon to stigmatise. Methodism, in whatever form, is an extreme; but, there is another opposite and far more dangerous extreme. To this latter extreme, Paley, for years, appeared wholly to belong. Thought, and experience, and approach to the unseen world, at length, gave him another view; and he seems to have written those latter compositions for the purpose of leaving behind him a record of his ultimate conviction, that religion is then only pursued as it ought, when we are serious respecting it, (Sermon I.);

when we meditate upon it, (Sermon III.); when we aim at purifying our hearts and affections, (Sermon V.); when we are attaining a taste for devotion, (Sermon VI.); and when, as our particular case may be, we are intent on being brought into a right way, if we are not yet in it, or the being more and more advanced in it, if we are, (Sermon VII.).

After these, there are other interesting discourses; but, I own, not all equally to my mind. Paley was not as complete a believer in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds as were to be wished; therefore, in doctrinal matters, I think him often defective, and sometimes wrong; but I do not know another volume, in which I could point to as much important, radical, initiatory matter, as is referred to in those six sermons. They shew, as authoritatively as the work of any modern individual could, what must, in common reason, be admitted respecting our duty as Christians, before we can take one effectual step in the path by which the Gospel leads to happiness.

What I mean by pointing out these discourses particularly, is, that they call attention to religion, with an extraordinary distinctness, in respect to first principles. Religion itself is deeply weighed; human nature is accurately considered; and positions are laid down respecting the establishment of practical religion in the individual mind, such as were felt to result from that twofold examination. Now, in reality, we must first know what we ought to be impressed with as Christians, before it can be possible to form any idea of what ought to be first attended to by a clergyman. I direct

attention, therefore, to what I deem the least exceptionable account of indispensable elementary views which are to be found in the English language.

There is an admirable, though wonderfully simple, little tract, written by the celebrated George Herbert, and to be found at the end of his Poems, published by Suttaby, Crosby, and Co., 1809, which gives as serious and yet pleasant a view of what a Church of England clergyman ought to be, as, I suppose, ever was delineated. Doubtless, being adapted to the early part of the seventeenth century (about 1630), many things must now be obsolete; but it is, notwithstanding, replete with excellence, and breathes the very spirit of primitive sanctity.

The two volumes of Letters to Mr. Stedman of Shrewsbury, the first by Orton, the second by Stonehouse, have many things in them worth a young clergyman's attention. But a kind of reading I would particularly recommend, would be Lives of remarkable men. For instance, Walton's "Lives of Hooker, Herbert, &c.;" Fell's "Life of Hammond," and I would add one modern Life, that of Dr. Townson, prefixed to his Works in two volumes. I mention this last Life, because, in my mind, it presents a specimen of true Church of England piety: certainly not as elevated and seraphic as that particular piety is, in its nature, fitted, and, I would say, intended, to be; yet solid, cheerful, amiable, and terminating in cloudless and even brilliant serenity. There is a noble sermon of Townson's, in the first volume, preached at Bishop

Porteus's first visitation at Chester. There is, also, an excellent little discourse, in the second volume, on the obedience of the Rechabites. I could wish you to have the volumes I now speak of, for the sake of the Life and the two sermons I have mentioned; you cannot fail of them at Rivingtons'.

An orthodox divine ought to be thoroughly acquainted with Pearson "On the Creed," which I conceive to be the most perfect theological work that has ever come from an English pen. A clergyman of the Church of England should also read with attention Bishop Burnet's "Exposition of the Articles;" and, with yet greater interest, Wheatley "On the Liturgy." I can add but one more hint, that Archbishop Secker's "Second Canterbury Charge" ought to be read with the most serious attention. I mentioned Herbert's "Country Parson" as to be found at the end of a particular edition of Herbert's "Poems;" but I understand a volume has been published from the Clarendon Press, called, I believe, the "Clergyman's Companion," in which Herbert's little tract is included.

I will now say a few words, and but a few, about Scott's "Force of Truth." I certainly do not advise you to read it. It is as honestly and uprightly written as it can be. But a more prejudiced little work could scarcely be met. Doubtless there is good in it. A strictly Calvinistic work (as this is) must necessarily have good in it, for Calvinism is a superstructure founded on vital Christianity. Whatever, therefore, we may think of the building, its foundation standeth sure. It is well when there is another superstructure, for, sure

I am, the Calvinistic superstructure is not that of gold, silver, and precious stones, which St. Paul was anxious for: in other words, that progress from strength to strength, and from wisdom to wisdom, by which the mind which has duly received the first principles of the Gospel of Christ, "goes on to perfection." I say, I am sure Calvinism is not the theory which ensures or sustains the progress. Still, I allow, it as substantially recognises the vitality, as it fails in exciting growth. I speak thus, to shew you that I am willing to give Mr. Scott credit for a certain degree of real worth; while I am compelled to think that that worth is clogged with revolting accompaniments; and I would add, so closely blended with them in his book, as to make it impossible to derive instruction from what is true, without being annoyed by the exceptionable ingredients.

But, really, the solid views which Mr. Scott's book contains, do not seem to me to be put with any remarkable advantage. The same lessons may be learned elsewhere without meeting any thing to revolt or puzzle. Mr. Scott, judging by that little work, is rather what is called a prosing writer. He affects nothing of taste, and shews no extraordinary judgment.

It would, at least, be easy to make it appear that Calvinism can have no recommendation but its supposed truth. It is not congenial to either taste, or understanding, or natural feeling. It adds neither grace, nor beauty, nor cheerfulness, to that cause of which it claims to be the accredited interpreter. If, however, this claim be just, if Christian truth must be

explained, either Calvinistically or imperfectly, there is no help ; taste, understanding, natural feeling, must all be sacrificed to the one thing needful.

Is, then, Calvinistic doctrine thus essential to a just view of Christianity ? Experience says, No ; for piety has never been more effectual, more radical, more perfect, than in the uncalvinistic and anti-calvinistic. I rejoice to think that I can avouch this by multiplied evidence. My conviction is, that the two specimens of piety would not bear a comparison ; that, on the contrary, gloomy complaint, uncomfortable aspect, acknowledged conflict and struggle with inward corruption, have been the concomitants of the one view ; while peace, cheerfulness, and the cloudless sunshine of the breast, have as signally attended the other.

Why, then, go to the school of gloom, and puzzle, and fearful apprehensions, for that instruction which Providence has so amply provided for us, in an easier, safer, more inviting form ? Why seek crude fruit among thorns, when, by the ministry of wiser teachers, Providence has, as it were, planted for us a garden eastward in Eden ; I mean, furnished us with instruction as rational as it is divine ? I must stop ; I am actually running into the subject on which I had begun my other letter : for that, therefore, I'll reserve it, and send these two sheets by this evening's mail. I have time to express no feeling about public matters ; but, you may judge how we are all affected.

I shewed your letter to the Archbishop, because I was confident you had no secret from him, nor have I. I thank Providence, I know one such man ;

but I know not another. I am no misanthrope. Many have done virtuously (within my view and knowledge); but he "excelleth them all."

I fear this sheet is very incorrect; I scarcely have time to read it over.

Most cordially and faithfully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

April 25, 1817.

* * * What can I say to Mr. L.'s persevering kindness? I am, indeed, more grateful than I can express, for the feeling which suggested this mark of regard. But, in truth, I have been for years—many years now,—so deeply gratified and cheered by dear Mr. L.'s heart-attachment to me, that room for any other evidence than that which I continually experienced, never could have entered my thoughts. I may almost say that I, instinctively, started back from receiving any superadded proof of that, which, in itself, gave me as high and pure enjoyment as any thing belonging to earth had ever afforded me. In speaking thus, I trust you know I express nothing but what I have uniformly felt. But really, even you cannot know the value I have placed upon Mr. L.'s friendship. I am, naturally, prone to think myself of little worth. Mr. L.'s undeviating, daily, hourly kindness to me, has done more (at least in quantity) than perhaps any one's else, to force me into a better estimate of myself. From others, I have

received much occasional kindness ; but there has been a continuance, an assiduity in his, that I have experienced from no other man on earth. By this, I value his last act to me. Honestly, I like the thing*. It is what I should have got for myself, had I thought it not wrong. But his love to me is embodied in his gift ; and that stamps a value, which nothing else could give it. God bless him here and for ever ! My cordial love to all ; and believe me, more than I can express,

Ever yours and Mr. L.'s,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Dawson Street, Oct. 9, 1817.

I HOPED to have seen you this day. But the person who was to interrogate me, who had been in the south of Ireland, and returned only yesterday, chose to refresh himself this day at his country seat ; and has, therefore, thought proper to defer his interview with me till to-morrow at eleven o'clock. I suppose an hour and a half will despatch my examination (which must be all written down, and read over to me) ; but I am not sure. I therefore only say, that, at some hour to-morrow, if I am well, I expect to be with you.

Adieu, till I see you. I earnestly trust to find you well. Give my love to —, whom I hope also to find as I would wish her in every respect.

* A gold repeater.

Providence has insulated me from common ties, as it were, to leave room for my being uncommonly anxious about those whom the same Providence has brought within the circle of my affections. What should I do on earth, if I had not these solitudes? Therefore, my dear friend, forgive the follies into which I am thus now and then betrayed; and remember, when I most need forgiveness, that I should appear more wise, if I were less cordially and entirely

Yours ever,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. HANNAH MORE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Bellevue, Bray, Sept. 9, 1818.

I HAVE long been wishing to bring myself before you: I was led to write to Mr. Wilberforce within these few days; and I could not but reflect that I owed my acquaintance with him to your kindness. I can truly say, that my conscience could not accuse me of ingratitude, either for that valuable kindness, or for the many other kindnesses which I have experienced from you. But what is feeling, if it be not expressed? "Shew me thy faith without thy works," said that inspired moralist, whose epistle, I am ready to think, has never yet been appreciated in the degree which it deserves. Its excellence is so unlike that of the other epistolary writings of the New Testament, that value for those (in itself impossible to be excessive) may, nevertheless, have diverted attention from beau-

ties, and depths, and heights, which differ extremely from what we find in St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John; and yet, in their own way, are transcendent. But see how I wander from my purpose; which is, to assure you once more—if you will have the goodness to receive my assurance,—that my long silence has not been owing to the least abatement of regard. I never can cease to think of you with sincerest interest, and most cordial attachment. And were it possible that forgetfulness of you (which is impossible) could steal upon me, my invaluable friend in this house would speedily remind me of my duty, and make me ashamed of my coldness. But I trust you'll believe me when I tell you that our feelings respecting you are in unison; and that we should be sorry to yield to any of your numerous friends in cordial desire and concern for your happiness.

My first object in writing, therefore, is to obtain from you, for Mrs. L.'s gratification, as well as for my own, an account of your present state of health. We shall be happy to know that this uncommonly fine summer has agreed with you; and that you are not, at present, distressed with any of the complaints under which you have so often suffered. We beg, however, that you may use no effort in writing, should your doing so be at all troublesome: a line or two will answer our chief purpose, if it tells us that you are pretty well, and that you still hold us in kind remembrance.

But, having begun with this primary view, I feel an inclination to direct your attention to something, which has set me on thinking, in a work

which, I believe, you once spoke of with approbation; I mean the *British Review*. I was greatly surprised to meet, in the last number (xxiii.), an opinion repeatedly given, that difference of judgment respecting the lawfulness or unlawfulness of theatrical, and, of course, of all other fashionable amusements,—yea, and even respecting the strictness or laxity of observing the Sunday,—is of the same nature with differences between Calvinists and Anti-Calvinists. You will find the passages to which I refer, in the review of “Cowper’s Letters to an Enquirer after Truth.” They occur in the 94th, and are repeated in the 107th page. The words are few; but they are so explicit, as to put the meaning of the writer beyond all question: and, in my opinion, they are not more intelligible than they are portentous: for, if it be a matter of indifference, whether we be or be not “conformed to this world,” what remains to be contended for, or how shall distinction be made, between that world which lieth in the wicked one, and those who “have escaped the pollutions that are in the world through lust?”

My habits of mind are as much settled as I have thought they could be, against all Calvinistic peculiarities. I conceive the Calvinistic system lamentably distorts the truth, and beclouds the loveliness of the Gospel; and especially of *his* doctrine, who, in explaining the words of our Lord Jesus Christ for succeeding generations, laboured more abundantly than all the other Apostles. Yet I can well conceive that a man may be a Calvinist, and love God: nay, I conceive that no one can be

correctly a Calvinist (that is, an exact disciple of him whom you used to call "Jean Chauvin"), without holding the essentials of vital religion. Irresistible grace implies efficacious grace; and efficacious grace I take to be the heart-pulse of the Gospel. In a serious Calvinist, then, I see one whom I have *primâ facie* reason for supposing a serious Christian. But, can I make any such probable inference from relaxed notions respecting the observance of the Sunday, or the lawfulness of theatrical amusements? In either case, I confess, all I have read, and witnessed, and felt, would lead me (allowing for exempt cases of ignorance or prejudice) to a directly opposite conclusion.

I myself, I acknowledge, am not friendly to an actual sabbatising of Sunday. I wish it to be observed, not so as to coerce, but so as to elevate; to be kept holy, in newness of spirit, rather than in the oldness of the letter. Whatever, therefore, tends to expand and ennoble the mind, whether it be directly religious, or, in a more general sense, "true and venerable, just and pure, lovely, and of good report," strikes me to come properly (if it come proportionably) within the employments or the recreations of Sunday. But, it is in St. Paul's sense of all things being pure to the pure, that I say this. A fence must be drawn between Sunday and the world; between its businesses and the businesses of other common days, or piety will be shut out of human life. Some years before I had the happiness of knowing you, I quoted (in a periodical publication) from one of your works this equally just and energetic remark:—"Sunday is,

in some sort, the Palladium of religion : and, so long as it is retained, it is impossible that the city of our God should be overcome." Perhaps I did not quote you *verbatim*. But I think I quoted from your " Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great."

As to theatrical amusements, I have ever agreed with what is said in your preface to your volume of tragedies, with the perusal of which you honoured me when in manuscript : and, if I offered any alterations, I am sure they were not meant to weaken its force. My sentiments are still the same ; and, I doubt not, so are yours. In truth, I deem a departure from those principles, in persons professing to be religious, to be one of the most fatal solvents of all Christian temper and practice that infernal subtlety would contrive. It is Protestant Jesuitism : the worst feature of which most finished engine that has yet appeared in " the mystery of iniquity," was, the sophistical endeavour to reconcile a life of worldly indulgence with the possession of substantial and saving religion.

I must break off. If you are able to write, do not delay to let Mrs. L. and myself hear from you ; for, in writing to the one, you will write to the other. Present my kindest regards to Mrs. Martha, who, I hope, has some alleviation of her too usual pains.

Adieu, my dear madam.

Believe me ever your most affectionate and
grateful Friend and Servant,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAREST ———,

Sunday, Nov. 15, 1818.

I THANK you much for your comfortable note: I rejoice at your report of ———. Your speculations on the baby are the only subject in which I do not feel myself in as full agreement with you as I am accustomed to reckon upon.

You say, “I do not believe that all is bad in human nature; but I cannot but believe that there is a great deal: and, what is more, I cannot help thinking, when I look at her placid little face, that ‘man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward.’ ”

Now, my dear, though I do not positively and in all respects dissent from any of these positions, yet there is a sadness in this sketch of human nature which I do not think founded in the average of fact. Life is beset with troubles on the right hand and on the left: and he who deviates ever so little from the central path of wisdom and virtue, is sure to feel the effect of his folly; and, still more, of his crime, if the deviation be essential. But how few are there who suffer Providence to be uniformly indulgent to them! How few who do not force over-ruling goodness to “visit their transgressions with the rod, and their sin with scourges!” Nay, where pious parents have, with the very breathing forth of their heart’s heart, committed their children to Divine guidance, and, we may piously believe, continued to offer the same petitions with still greater fervour, in

that nearer access which they have enjoyed in Paradise, there might be no way of answering their prayers but by suffering the Prodigal to fall into such distress as should be the means of bringing him to himself. It is, therefore, in one way or other, a general truth, that "man is born to trouble:" but I conceive it is not an universal truth. I humbly think that the gracious Parent of all delights in creating peace for his children, here as well as hereafter; and that the beautiful declaration in the Psalm, "Great peace have they that love thy law," has its outward as well as its inward completion. The words you quote are those of Eliphaz; and, for a qualification of them in favour of my idea, I refer you to the conclusion of the same chapter, where, without being conscious of it, he seems to be the prophet of Job's future prosperity.

I respect the words of Eliphaz, because they occupy a place in the Divine volume, and also breathe that air of inspired poetry which marks the undeniably prophetic writings. But I rely much more implicitly on the words of St. Paul, that "godliness has promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." But it cannot have the former promise if it does not make a difference in the liability to sorrow. Unfortunately, this comparative exemption from severer penalties has not, yet, made the assertion of Eliphaz become less generally true; because few, as yet, have chosen the more happy course: and, of those few, the far greater number have required frequent, and sometimes signal correction. But, I

am strongly persuaded that, where the choice of God for our portion is, at once, early and entire; where the religious affection is so deep and influential as to predominate over every other desire, and regulate the whole of life,—peace, in all its blessed forms, may be hoped for; and a providential sunshine will make our path as delightful as it is secure. I rest this persuasion on various passages of Holy Scripture. And I cannot doubt, that, if we could examine individual life, it would be confirmed by experience. Thus, then, I venture to qualify your scarcely fair conclusion from your baby's "placid little face." From so serene a dawn, I think you might, rather, augur a tranquil day. And, if you take good care in training your little niece,—keeping yourself in that clear atmosphere of mind and heart, in which, I trust, you have begun life,—which, I earnestly hope, you will never forfeit,—and which (if you never forfeit it) will, I am sure, never be materially overcast,—I doubt not, what you see in your little favourite, and what you feel in yourself, will unite to afford evidence in support of all that I have been saying; namely, that, when the Divine blessing is uniformly and unreservedly pursued, our heavenly Father gives (like Caleb to his daughter, Judges, i. 15) not only "the upper," but also "the nether springs."

And now, my child, as to your estimate of evil in human nature, I could wish you to distinguish between two things, which it is usual to confound under that general term; but which, in reality, are deeply different from each other: I mean, the

inherent disorder of mere animal nature, and the moral taint which is contracted as soon as that disorder is voluntarily yielded to by the rational mind. We are, in our material nature, mere animals; and, as such, are liable to all the emotions which we perceive in the brute creation. What we should have been in this respect, if Adam and Eve had never transgressed, I know not. But, God having seen good to continue a naturally diseased race, I think we are bound to conclude that the simple evil which is transmitted, as forming, in the actual state of things, a feature of the Divine economy, is of a very different character indeed from that pravity which grows out of perverse volition. It is in this latter that moral evil begins: and the animal irregularity which precedes this volition (or, as in a delirium, is independent of all volition) belongs to the class, not of moral, but of natural evil.

I am aware that a language apparently different from this is found in books of divinity: and, indeed, in what I respect more, the Catechism and Baptismal Service of our Church. But, I trust, I deny nothing which those formularies mean to assert: I believe their concurrent import is, that man, as he is born into the world, must, necessarily, be the slave (and therefore the victim) of his brutal nature, if he be not spiritually attracted, and animated from above. To maintain the vital necessity of Divine Grace, and of making the incarnate Deity our support and defence against our frail and disordered selves—the prop and ally of our awakened higher nature, against our deceit-

ful and rebellious lower nature—seems to have been the leading object in those statements of Catholic doctrine, to which, happily, the Church of England has adhered; and to this deep evangelic truth, I not only implicitly, but cordially subscribe. Still, however, when I consider this low state of man, in connexion with its divinely-proportioned remedy, and when I reflect that the human race was continued in such circumstances, obviously for the sole reason that the Eternal Son might be glorified, and “Principalities and Powers in heavenly places” instructed and delighted through its recovery, I can no longer regard the disorder which God has allowed to be transmitted, as a matter of lamentation. I view it, much rather, as like the water which Elijah poured upon the sacrifice, in order that the effect of the fire from heaven might be the more forcibly demonstrated.

We owe entirely the knowledge of this mystery—at once so profound and so sublime—to the Gospel revelation. But much, to elucidate it, may be collected by observation. From what you yourself know of human nature, could you venture to wish that the baby were much less self-willed, or much less liable to be annoyed? It would not suit your purpose hereafter, if it were all wax and no marble: and, whatever be its sensibilities, the more vivid they are, the more must their efforts to expand, and their yet wholly uncontrollable motions, disturb the little animal economy. You truly say (in substantial consonance with the doctrine I maintain), that “as yet she cannot sin, because she knows nothing.” But I wish you to take

even a more cheerful view ; and to see, in those symptoms of firmness and sensibility, the promise of a marked and definite character ; which, though requiring more steady management, and more decisive principles, may attain a moral height, and fill a place in social life, which would be beyond the reach of minds that bring, as it were, a ready formed good temper into the world with them. Such, perhaps, do not offend ; but neither do they improve. How can they ? moral strength, in our dispensation, can only be gained by moral resistance. Consequently, the less need there is of moral resistance, the less growth of moral energy.

Thus far, my dearest child, I have talked at large. Let me now, very shortly, apply these last remarks to yourself. You are not one of the soft waxen natures ; you feel, sometimes, in yourself a little of what you speculate upon in the baby. But remember, there is nothing in you, naturally, which is not in you by providential intention, for the greater good. There is nothing which may not be regulated : I would add, which the omnipresent Saviour (who is ever ready to approach us yet more nearly, and even to enter into us in the way of his own blessed appointment) will not infallibly enable us to regulate, if we wait on him with cordiality. And the more needful the regulation, the more deep will be the benefit and the comfort, when the grace of God has made our efforts with ourselves effectual. We shall be solidly remunerated by the way, and deeply remunerated in the sequel. Even "the work of righteousness will

be peace;" but "its effect will be quietness and assurance for ever."

I think I was a far worse subject, naturally, than either baby, or yourself. But I cannot, now, wish that by having been more malleable, I should have less profound motives for gratitude.

Adieu.

Ever yours,

A. K.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO MRS. ———.

February 13, 1819.

I HAVE often thought that few things recorded in the sacred Scripture are more remarkable than those words of St. Luke;—"and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly." It appears, then, that even in our Lord himself, considered as a human being, there was room for devotional excitement; and it would seem to have been with reference to this height of earnestness, that it is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "he was heard in that he feared." Had our Lord's mind alone been concerned, we may believe his fervour would have been as great at the first as it was at the last. But animal nature requires an impulse suited to itself. And as long as we inhabit houses of clay, the most upright motion of the mere mind will be comparatively defective. Therefore, at suitable times, afflictions are sent to spur the sluggishness of human nature, and to raise the inner man to that ardent importunity, which perhaps, according to the laws of our frame, may be as necessary to

capacitate us for the reception of higher spiritual blessings, as what they call a welding heat is necessary in order to two pieces of iron being hammered into one.

In this instance, we might most reasonably say, "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master." If he, in a natural way, was not above the want of a stimulant, how deeply must we require it! Yet it is also true that His sufferings, as Captain of our salvation, have reduced to a comparative nothing the painful discipline indispensable to our well-being. In him, the Christian graces were, as if, in the first instance, to be prepared and substantiated, in order that from him, as from a fountain-head, they might be communicated to all who in successive ages should be made members of his mystical body. In order to our fully receiving such communications, it may, in the nature of things, be necessary that we should, in some small degree, participate in what our Redeemer felt, while he was, as it were, preparing those graces. But, certainly, it is in a small degree: and no doubt even that degree apportioned to the strength, or rather to the exigence, of the party; that is, no more suffering allotted than is, on the whole, necessary for the beneficial purpose; for "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

But, there is even a less mysterious reason for this Divine process: it is only in a certain degree of affliction that some of the most valuable, I would say, even the most delicate and endearing, provisions of evangelic aid can be adequately appre-

ciated or felt. The mild brilliancy of the stars is invisible while the sun is above the horizon. It was only in the night that the Psalmist could have conceived that beautiful thought, — “ When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and stars which thou hast ordained : what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him ? ” Similarly, while in the most innocent way we are rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing ; however sincerely even then “ we may set God always before us,” the feeling of our dependence for inward support and consolation cannot be so vivid as when we sensibly feel that nothing but God’s gracious influence can make our state supportable. As then, on the whole, we cannot question but that every pain which we are made to suffer, with this merciful view, is substantially profitable ; so I doubt not, but we may conclude the amount of absolute pleasure to be far greater, in this way, than it could be in any other. There is certainly no sensible delight in this world equal to what is felt when the mysterious magnetism of Divine things consciously attracts and fixes the heart : the state of things, therefore, in which the heart is most capable of being thus attracted and fixed, must be that also which admits of the highest possible enjoyment.

We are always weak, and we are occasionally afflicted : to help our weakness we need grace ; to assuage our affliction we need consolation. In some respects, however, this is very like a distinction without a difference ; for weakness is affliction, and grace

is consolation. But the truth is, that we do not feel our purely spiritual necessities sufficiently, when we are sensible of no other necessities; therefore, to teach even St. Paul the full value of Divine grace, there was given to him (*given*, as if it were a blessing) a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet him. And, when he repeatedly asked for deliverance, he was, at length, told that this affliction was, as it were, a dark ground, without which the Divine Redeemer's influence could not manifest its brightness; a contrast, without which dull human nature could not perfectly relish the blessing, however intrinsically excellent.

Accordingly, St. Paul adds, from his own feeling, his cordial testimony to the fitness of the arrangement. "Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me; for when I am weak, then am I strong." I will not weaken these words by attempting any paraphrase. They say all I have been attempting to say, with a force that no words could heighten.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Dawson Street, April 8, 1819.

* * * I cannot say I have grown much better; but I do not despond. I trust Providence, and endeavour to exercise patience. I thank God, that, after all, I have very little to bear.

Last night I read the first eighteen verses of the tenth chapter of St. John, just before I went

to bed. I was struck with the thought which occurred, that this portion contained almost the only parable which St. John records: and that, of all parables which are recorded, this is the fullest of gentleness, amiability, and consolation. It gives a compendious view of spiritual Christianity; the deepest, the solidest, the sweetest, the serenest, the surest, the most comprehensive that could be conveyed in words. There is a beautiful idea in the beginning of Leighton's fifteenth lecture,—of nature's being fitted beforehand for the elucidation of Divine truth. This semblance of a shepherd and his sheep is strongly in favour of such a supposition. It ought to be felt, that our Redeemer himself was the best explainer of his own dispensation. But, if so, of how many dogmatical thorns, of how much superficial theory, does this Divine representation divest our religion! How inward and vital, on the other hand, as opposed to what is cold, compromising, and worldly! What our Lord says elsewhere, applies infinitely here; "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Nothing could be more simple, yet nothing more sublime. According to this infallible standard, Christianity is, essentially, the discipleship of the heart, met by a presence and communication as divinely suited to this inward connexion, as the visible presence and external communications of our blessed Lord were proportioned to the outward discipleship of his followers during his ministry on earth. Nothing less than this is taught us in this passage; and nothing more need have been taught: for this deepens

into every thing, branches out into every thing, rises into every thing, and comprehends every thing which our state in this lower world can possibly require. It has the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. And what deep, what strict, what extensive, what infinitely comprehensive morality (inward and outward) does it enjoin? But I must stop. Mr. — is come in; and I must only tell you that, with love to all,

I am ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAREST,

April 15, 1819.

You may think me negligent about what you mentioned: but an attack of sickness has disabled me from writing; and still so hangs upon me, that I can only say a very few words.

You'll observe that the point brought before our Lord was not moral, but judicial. The question was not, whether the woman had committed a heinous sin? but, whether she should be put to death? They who brought her, seem to have hoped that our Lord would either invade the judicial office, by condemning her, or contradict the Mosaic law, by interfering to save her from punishment. Our Lord, with the wisdom which ever appeared in him, avoided the dilemma; and completely embarrassed those who wished to entrap him. They went away, and left the woman stand-

ing in the midst. Then it is that he asks the question, "Hath no man condemned thee?" that is, clearly, did any judicial sentence pass upon you? She answers in the negative. Our Lord then says, "Neither do I condemn thee;" meaning, simply, neither do I think it right to do what your accusers have left undone; they have suffered you to escape, and I will not interfere to prevent it.

This, you'll observe, was in strict consistency with our Lord's conduct on other analogous occasions. "Man," says He to the dissatisfied brother, "who made me a judge, or a divider over you?" It seems to have essentially belonged to our Lord's mission, not to act judicially in any respect. "I am come," says he, "not to judge the world, but to save the world." His business was exclusively moral, not judicial. Hereafter, he was to come as a judge. As incarnate, and a sojourner on earth, he was to perform the office not of a judge, but of a Saviour. He, therefore, in the case of the woman, confines himself to the gracious purpose for which he had become man. But he does this in such a manner, as to put the moral bearing of the case out of all possibility of doubt: for, to his words of mercy, he adds those of weightiest admonition—"Go, and sin no more."

Here our Lord guards his leniency against the slightest shadow of misconception. He tells her she had sinned; and this was to say every thing. David's confession (which afterward expressed itself at large in the 51st Psalm) was confined, in the first instance, to these strong words: "I have

sinned against the Lord." Full as his heart at the moment was, this simple acknowledgment did justice to his feeling. In truth, the term sin, in Holy Scripture, is replete with meaning. It is the opposite, the contradictory, to God's pure and perfect nature: and, therefore, if not subdued and expelled, the pledge of endless misery to its victim. "Sin no more" was, therefore, at once the deepest accusation, and the most awful warning. It was to tell her that she had done infinitely more than expose herself to the being stoned to death; that she had exposed herself to the infinitely more dreadful judgment of God; but that she had now further time of trial; on her use of which must depend whether her present escape would be a gain or an aggravation.

It is probable (indeed morally certain) that our Lord saw something in the woman's heart, fitted to receive his admonition. Wherever this was the case, we find him speaking gently to the most flagrant sinners. For example, to the woman at the well of Samaria, whose immoral conduct he circumstantially presents to her; and yet, without adding one epithet of blame. In like manner, to the woman who stood behind him in Simon's house: her cause he pleads with the Pharisee who would have had him repel her. Lord Bacon excellently observes, that our Lord, knowing men's thoughts, answered their thoughts rather than their words. And that, for want of keeping this fact in view, we may often overlook the true point of what our Lord says. This remark is applicable to such instances as those now referred

to: and not least, I presume, to the particular instance which you have brought before me.

The calmness of our Lord's manner may prevent our perceiving the depth and force of his expressions. Besides, coming as a deliverer and moral physician, he speaks of sin as a calamity, rather than as a crime. He was about to evince the evil of it, by sacrificing himself for its extirpation. Denouncements, therefore, would have been superfluous, when he was on the point of giving the most awful proof of its malignity which could be offered to the mind or heart of intelligent beings. In dying on the cross, our blessed Lord made himself an antidote for the poison of sin. And he evidently did so, because the depth of the evil required, and its tremendous magnitude warranted, such a remedy; namely, that Deity should, by incarnation, humiliation, and inexpressible suffering (as far as that was possible), modify itself into a medicine for man's morally diseased nature.

Any possible wrong inference, therefore, from the gentleness of our Lord's words, is infinitely precluded by the import of this last great act. The influence of this act, he himself describes as fire: "I am come to send fire upon the earth." And, doubtless, fire is not more naturally fitted to consume inflammable matter, than our Redeemer's death, impressed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, is divinely fitted to consume the inward elements of moral evil. What we are to be brought to by this mysterious process, he himself has distinctly delineated in his Sermon on the Mount;

the principles of which must be our standard for explaining what he has said elsewhere, in more general terms, respecting sin or duty.

The term fire, however, leads me to observe that there is a first fire, and a final fire; the one remedial, the other destructive. By the remedial fire which our Saviour came to kindle, we may, if we will, have our corruptions burned out. If we resist or despise this overture of mercy, we identify ourselves with our corruptions, and become fit fuel for that last fire, in which (St. Paul tells us) he who was once the meek and gracious Saviour, will be revealed from heaven to take vengeance on them who had spurned at his redeeming goodness.

I have now, to the best of my power, answered your first question. To your second, I must reply, that, in my judgment, ecstasies at a dying hour are a very precarious evidence of preparation for future happiness.

This subject would admit of being much enlarged upon. It might be shewn, from the nature of the human mind, that ecstasies may be produced by fallacious means, and on the most deceptive grounds. Folly and vice have had their martyrs, who have often shewn fortitude worthy of a better cause: and it is not impossible, that instances of this nature may have sometimes risen to ecstasy. Enthusiasm, assisted by opium, I believe used often to make Turkish soldiers ecstatic on the field of battle. In short, I have read enough to satisfy me that nothing but moral love of the moral God is a test of rectitude, or a pledge of safety. They who rejoice in a persuasion that pardon of sins, or

certainty of future bliss, has been made known to them by some Divine communication, though in this instance mistaken, may still have that moral love of which I speak; and, if so, a mixture of erroneous delight will not affect their more solid ground of hope. But I think the sure bottom is much better seen through the still water. True religious joy is ———

“ A sacred and homefelt delight,
A sober certainty of waking bliss.”

To feel this, is the privilege of the dying Christian : and it ought to be his daily care to provide this cordial for his last hour. But, I am sure, this happy state of mind can only arise from conscious ascendancy of Divine love in the heart; which, by having conquered the world, the flesh, and the devil, demonstrates whence it has come, and whither it must return. He only, in a word, who has found God his refuge from the power of sin, can be sure that God is his support against the fear of death.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

Dawson Street,
Nov. 25, 1820, near 5 o'clock.

I WILL thank ——— for her kind letter, through you. Till this moment I was not sure I should have the power; for, since breakfast, I have had, with little respite, one visitant after another. * *

Do you remember shewing me a passage on Sunday, in the volume of Singlin, which I had handed to you, and asking me if I did not disagree with what you pointed out? I was wishing afterward to give a more distinct answer than you then had from me. The words are, “ Cette concupiscence avec laquelle nous sommes nés, est tellement entrée dans notre nature, que l’âme ne sera jamais entièrement dégagée de ses liens, jusqu’à ce qu’elle le soit des liens du corps.” Now, if I rightly understand these words, I confess my expectations are brighter. I am not sure that we have any right to expect a total extinction of all which Roman Catholic theologians include under the term concupiscence. I think that it existed, according to their sense, in some degree, in Adam before the fall; for, had there been nothing inordinate to be called up by temptation, how could he have been tempted? Liability, therefore, to be tempted, I conceive inseparable, not only from fallen human nature, but from human nature in itself, until “ this mortal shall have put on immortality.” And, consequently, I must grant that movements of what those Divines would possibly call concupiscence may be felt, on trying occasions, even by advanced Christians, during life. But, then, I doubt if this is more than to allow that advanced Christians may still be tempted.

There is, however, something more in that passage: the words are “ de ses liens.” This expression conveys more than the idea of something just felt, instantly resisted, and substantially put down. It supposes a degree of *bondage*; that is,

of inability to resist, instantly and effectually. This I cannot admit, because such a state would neither accord with St. John's "perfect love," which "casteth out fear;" nor with the assertion of the same Apostle, not merely of mature, but, also, of thoroughly faithful Christians: "He keepeth himself so that the wicked one toucheth him not."

Roman Catholic writers are often highly edifying, from the degree in which they have studied the interior: so far, therefore, as the *substance* of piety is concerned, they are scarcely to be excelled. But the true maturity of religion, as described in the Gospel, implies a mental strength and liberty, not likely to be attained by those who, on principle, wear fetters. If they "of full age" are such as have their *αισθητηρια* exercised by use, to "discern both good and evil,"—to attain this state they must have taken that apposite advice of the same Apostle: "Be not children in understanding; in wickedness be ye children; but in understanding be ye men." How far a Roman Catholic could, consistently, take this advice, may be seen by the following sentiment of one of the most enlightened Roman Catholics of his day—or of any day. "Il faut être enfant, c'est-à-dire, humble, simple, et point raisonneur, pour entrer dans le royaume de Dieu. À la bonne heure qu'on raisonne tant que l'on voudra sur des matières qui ne regardent pas la religion; pourvu qu'on le fasse sans vanité et sans curiosité. Mais, pour ce qui regarde la foi, et la discipline de toute l'Eglise, *il n'y a qu'à obeir.*"

Whatever requires wise exercise of mind, must, I conceive, be greatly impeded by this systematic

subjugation of mind. I, therefore, deem the best Roman Catholic divines to be but poor authorities respecting the limit of religious attainment ; though, even by them, lofty views may sometimes be caught. Intellectual error, in honest subjects, is often attended with a happy inconsistency. They (I mean Roman Catholic writers) often speak truth, therefore, in spite of their great theological master, St. Augustin. And even St. Augustin, at times, spoke high truths in spite of himself. Our English divines had nothing, comparatively, to trammel them ; and, consequently, are, in this high respect, surer guides. Herbert, singly, is, on this point, to me, better authority than the whole Roman Catholic church. *I* maintain nothing but what he maintained from his own experience. May you and I, and those we both love, feel like him ! I desire no more.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REV. DR. WOODWARD.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

Bellevue, Delgany, Nov. 27, 1821.

I WOULD fain give you satisfaction on the point you propound to me ; but I apprehend your brother's doubt respecting my ways of thinking would not be removed by any thing I could say.

In my mind, the scheme of the Gospel must be considered all together, in order to the correct understanding of any one feature. Except this method be seriously and dispassionately pursued, there can be no hope of any proposition, or of any

doubt, being brought to a fair trial. I think, however, I see a great unwillingness to resort to the "lively oracles" (notwithstanding the unexampled zeal to disperse them); and, for this reason, were I ever so elaborately to explain my views of evangelic truth, I could not expect to obtain even a patient hearing.

You yourself shall know, however, a little of what I think; and you may keep it to yourself, or otherwise, as you think proper.

I have never asserted that the whole of our redemption effected by our Lord Jesus Christ was confined to what is wrought in us through the power of the Holy Ghost. There might have been an indispensable necessity for grounds which could not be questioned, whereon to reconcile the indulgence shewn to fallen man, with the regularity of God's general government. It should seem, also, that something like a general subjugation of this earth to Satan, as well as a particular and practical thralldom of human nature to moral evil, followed from the first offence. I conceive, therefore, that our blessed Saviour so accomplished his great errand to earth, as effectually to remove those preliminary difficulties at the same time, and by the same course of acting and suffering, which was necessary to make him a spiritual Saviour, the true antitype of the serpent in the wilderness.

I might stop here if I merely wished to give a quieting answer. But I confess I do not wish to be thought to say more than I mean; and, therefore, I think it right to make two observations, in addition to what I have just stated.

First, I do not find in Holy Scripture that it was by suffering punishment in man's stead, that mercy to man was harmonised with the general government of God. The expressions on which this theory is founded, do not seem to me unequivocally to sustain it. That there is a rhetorical sense in which this language might be used with safety, I do not deny; and I will not assert that an instance of this kind nowhere occurs in Scripture. The terms used in the 53d chapter of Isaiah, are the strongest in this way; yet one of them, certainly not the weakest ("surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows"), is applied by St. Matthew to our Saviour's healing diseases and casting out devils. The question is, whether those expressions of Isaiah, especially as explained in the New Testament, have not a meaning of a much deeper and nobler kind, than that usually ascribed to them? Let, for example, a forensic theologian give, on his principles, a fair interpretation of the words, "With his stripes we are healed." Is there not in the term "healed," a specific image which must mean more, or rather, I would say, something else, than that on which he lays stress?

But what weighs with me most is, that St. Paul expresses himself in the 24th verse of the first chapter of Colossians, in a manner which I conceive he would not have done, had he considered our Redeemer's sufferings as punishment borne in the stead of guilty man. Just turn to the passage in the Greek Testament, and observe how he uses the very language respecting his own sufferings,

which is supposed to express the vicarious import of our Redeemer's sufferings. St. Paul says, "And now I rejoice in *παθήματα μου ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν*." Every word is the same; and therefore the supposed conclusiveness of this language, when applied to our Saviour, cannot be admitted. But St. Paul goes yet farther, and tells the Colossians that he was filling up the *ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ*. Is it conceivable that St. Paul could have thus deliberately assimilated his sufferings to those of our Lord, and represented himself in a secondary and subordinate way, continuing the same sort of self-sacrifice which had been accomplished by his Master, if he had contemplated the sufferings of his Master as the discharge in kind of man's penal obligation? Could he have thought of imitating or following up a proceeding so exclusively appropriate, and so self-evidently incommunicable? I cannot stop to inquire what might have been the actual views of the Apostle: I content myself with asking, Will his words accord with the views of popular theology?

I believe, for my own part, that what was, in the first instance, done for mankind by our Saviour's sacrifice, was effected by its transcendent merit. In doing what was indispensable for the spiritual salvation of man, he did, also, what was meritoriously available to remove every difficulty in the invisible world. When such a Being interposed in such a manner, every intelligence throughout the universe must have felt that it was wise and right to spare the first offenders, and to

bear, through successive ages, with their sinful offspring, in order to their being the subject of so stupendous a work of mercy.

While, therefore, I most readily admit that the sacrifice of Christ was, like the typical sacrifices of the law, expiatory, as well as purificatory, I conceive its ineffable value accounts as rationally for the one effect, as its intrinsic and inexhaustible virtue has been proved experimentally, through all ages of the Church, in the other effect. I will, however, enlarge on this point no farther, but simply express a wish that the two views be tried by what is said respecting our Saviour's death, in the four Gospels; and that the view be preferred which agrees best with that standard. I refer to the Gospels, because they relate the transaction: but I am quite in as little fear about the Epistles.

My second observation is, that the view I have given does not necessarily affect the doctrine of the atonement; because it remains to be proved what the true Scripture doctrine of the atonement is. I suspect that on this point Holy Scripture has been searched for what would support, rather than for what would inform. It is my wish simply to follow its guidance; and, comparing what is said of the typical atonement in the 16th of Leviticus, with the application of that type to what has been done by the great High Priest, in the ninth and tenth chapters of the Hebrews, I cannot hesitate in concluding that the *ἱλασμός* of the Gospel is, primarily and essentially, a purificatory provision; at the same time unquestionably including

a release of those who are purified, from all penal liabilities previously contracted. Giving myself, as well as I can, without prepossession, to the passages I have named, I seem to myself to be led to the above conclusion, by as plain declarations in the Old Testament, and as clear a series of observations in the New Testament, as could be expressed in human language. I will not attempt to go into an examination of the portions of Holy Scripture to which I refer. I merely desire any candid person to read them for himself; and see whether the primary purpose of the typical atonement was not to "cleanse" and to "hallow" the holy places and things "from the uncleanness of the children of Israel" (Levit. xvi. 19); and, also, whether similarly, the primary purpose of the great Antitype was not to purge the worshippers, so as that they should have no more "conscience of sin" (Heb. x. 2.), to "sanctify" us, by "the taking away of sin" (ver. 4, 10, 11); yea, and by the "one offering to perfect for ever them that are sanctified."

From this great purpose, however, I do not mean to separate the blessing of forgiveness. The "having such an High Priest over the house of God," is adduced for our encouragement to seek "mercy," as well as "grace to help us in time of need." But though this necessary assurance is never lost sight of, it is not the thing dwelt upon; and, we may dare to suppose, for this plain reason, because it is included in the other. As the majus contains the minus, so to be "purged by the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the living

God," is, by necessary implication, to be forgiven in the truest sense; nor can we know that we are forgiven in any sense, except so far as we possess this one infallible evidence of God's kindness toward us.

It is, however, a remarkable circumstance, that, in the type, the purification is first made, and then the removal of penal liabilities is symbolically represented by the living goat carrying off the sins of the people into a land not inhabited. My persuasion is, that this latter figure represents what is done by the living Saviour for all who participate in the purifying effects of his death. For this instruction two typical representations were necessary; one corresponding to the dying, the other to the risen, Saviour; and St. Paul has accordingly said, "if, when we were enemies" (that is, as he expresses it, Coloss. i. 21, enemies in our mind by wicked works), "we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

If I am intelligible thus far I shall be glad; and, perhaps, I have sufficiently explained myself. But the last text I have quoted leads me to observe, that the view which I have stated implies, consequentially, a very different mode of understanding St. Paul's Epistles from that which has been popular in what is called the religious world. I suppose no text is more relied upon, as supporting the modern theories, than that which I have just quoted (Rom. v. 10). Yet, on comparing this text with the equivalent text in Colossians, another interpretation becomes indispensable; for, in

the latter text, there is strictly the same position of being "reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." But who are they that are reconciled? Why, they who had been alienated and enemies in their mind "through wicked works." Surely, to reconcile the alienated and the hostile, through wicked works, is to remove that alienation, and to subdue that hostility of mind. It was, therefore, we who were to be reconciled to God; and we are taught, in both passages, that there is a virtue in the death of the Redeemer adequate thus to penetrate and conquer the human heart.

I freely confess that I consider the misinterpretation of these and similar passages to be the parent error of the modern religious world. To suppose, for instance, that to "save from sins" is not to save from sins, but from the penal consequences of sins, and that to "cleanse from all sin" is not to cleanse from all sin, but from the imputation or the punishment of sin, is, in my opinion, a dangerous departure from the simplicity of Holy Scripture. I am aware that they think that these blessings are, in a certain degree, consequentially provided for: but man cannot safely make that consequential, which the Divine word has made primary. Besides, how can they, on any rational ground, divide, even in theory, the forgiveness of sin from the subjugation of sin? On this principle alone I am willing to rest my argument. To forgive, is to remove the penalty; and the worst penalty of sin is the reigning power of sin. This, in itself, constitutes a hell in the

breast ; and, pregnant as it is with enmity to God, it grows up, by degrees, into the hell of hell. The power of sin ineradicably fixed in the soul, is, in truth, the worm that never dieth ; and full-grown enmity to God is, in the highest sense, the fire that never shall be quenched. To suppose there were any thing worse in hell than enmity to God, would be to suppose that there were something better in heaven than the love of God. But all the laws of nature require that the supreme good and the supreme evil should correspond to each other ; and that, therefore, as the enjoyment of the supreme good is the heaven of heaven, so malignant aversion to that good must be the hell of hell.

I cannot, therefore, understand what the blessing is, the distinct attainment of which is so much pressed, and the hope of which is made matter of so much joy. I do not seem to myself any where to find such a blessing held forth in the sacred word ; and I am well assured it was not thought of in the early ages of the Christian Church. They who died for the faith, gloried in the Redeemer as an inward and spiritual Saviour. In this, they placed the efficacy of his death, and the virtue of his blood ; nor, by the Calvinistic Milner's honest confession, was the notion of forensic justification taught by any writer previous to the Reformation. In vital matters I am content to understand the Scriptures as they were understood by the ancient Christians. Where I see the most exalted piety, I am ready to conclude that there was

the purest faith. But, besides this, I soberly think they have the connected, untortured, text of Scripture on their side; and, so thinking, I am content to be singular in my own day, when I feel myself in unison with fifteen centuries.

I have said enough; and I should not have said one word, had you not desired to have a statement of my sentiments. I only add—take them altogether; what I have said first, with what I have said last.

I have written the latter part of this letter very much without taxing my eyes; one of which is so weak at present as to disable me wholly from reading. I beg my kind regards to Mrs. W.

I am, my dear Doctor,

With every kind and cordial wish, yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

Nov. 29, 1821.

P.S.—It may, perhaps, be thought that I have conceded enough, in the above letter, to justify those who differ from me in dwelling, as they do, upon what our Redeemer has done for us. But this would be greatly to misunderstand me. I humbly conceive that this part of the Divine scheme has been done so perfectly, that nothing remains to be added to it by our thoughts; and that all which remains is, that we act upon it correspondently to the gracious purpose with which it was done; which, certainly, was not that we should draw direct confidence for ourselves from this general blessing, but that we should solicit and obtain from the mercy of God that

internal grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the saving operation of which, on our minds and hearts, every thing else is but preliminary. "He gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

If any one should doubt whether, on his asking for grace, he will be heard; or whether, on his returning, like the prodigal son, from a far country, he will be received to mercy; doubtless, what our Lord has done in the first instance, is the true answer to all such apprehensions. But all solid and appropriate comfort must be derived from the conscious efficacy of Divine grace on our hearts. When God condescends to work in us the good pleasure of his goodness, then we know he has forgiven us our past sins; and to derive this confidence from any other kind of assurance, is to run the hazard of most fatal delusion.

It is strange that modern theologians do not more perceive that the prevalent idea in the Gospel is the Kingdom of God. In this single expression we learn our great business, namely, to have this kingdom established within us. Till this be effected, to take comfort in any thing else, is delusion; except, merely, the comfort necessary to encourage our unremitting pursuit. So far as this blessing is really conferred upon us, we may have "rejoicing in ourselves, and not in another." This is the plain language of Scripture. St. Paul's expression is—"Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is the language of the Catholic Church, in every age and nation; and sure I am that it is

only in proportion as this one great object is urged, simply, purely, experimentally, and wisely, that real benefit will be done to immortal souls. Herein, truly and undelusively, consist “the glad tidings of great joy, which” were to “be to all nations;” and hence only, I am persuaded, can ever arise, “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men.”

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

April 11, 1822.

I WAS glad to receive your note; and pleased, under the circumstances, that it was short. Your account of ——— gives me heartfelt pleasure, and your little postscript was very gratifying.

I must say there is nothing of the kind I more wish for you, than close intimacy with the Greek Testament. The Scotch novelist says of the Bible,

“ Within this Sacred Volume lies
The mystery of mysteries.”

And I would say, that in the Greek Testament is the treasure of treasures. Precise words are, in any case, of high value. There is a charm as well as a satisfaction in them, which makes felicity, in this respect, have all the effect of eloquence. “A word spoken in season,” says Solomon, “how good is it!” He means this in a very different sense; but the remark is true of every individual word which perfectly performs, at once, its single and

its relative duty ; is luminous itself, and both gives and receives light by virtue of happy juxtaposition.

If this remark be just, it holds good in no instance so much as in the Greek Testament. In my judgment, this wonderful book is a permanent philological, as well as moral miracle ; and, while to feel its moral force, so as to be moulded thereby, is anticipated heaven,—a paradise incomparably superior to that which Adam lost,—its philological and philosophical excellences are, I venture to assert, the richest entertainment, as well as the happiest occupation, that can engage the mental *αἰσθησις* of mortal man.

I go on pretty well, and went this day to the Association, but in a chair. But I must stop ; for, though I meant to have given you more, Dean Graves came in and sat till the moment of dinner ; and hence my purposed time of writing has been materially abridged.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

April 19, 1822.

I MEANT to have written to you yesterday ; but found it impracticable. And, were I accustomed to give you nothing but news, I need not write to day ; as you will have already known, through a far better medium, every thing I could tell you.

But I have some matter for a letter to you, notwithstanding. The more so at present, as I

had not room to say all I intended, respecting the stanza from the Gospel of St. John.

Nothing needed more to be put past doubt than what kind of freedom our Lord meant: for it might be said that it was freedom from the sense of guilt and condemnation, in the way in which doctrinal theologians understand those terms. But our Saviour's answer to the Jews, who were indignant at his supposing them not already free (which was foolish, on their own principles, they being then in actual subjugation to the Romans), puts his profound meaning out of question. "*Ἀμὴν, ἀμὴν, λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, δοῦλός ἐστι τῆς ἁμαρτίας.*" It follows, by inevitable consequence, that it is moral liberty of which our Lord supremely speaks; though, from what he goes on to say after the last quoted words, he may have meant (indeed, I think he did mean) to include the peculiar liberty of the Christian dispensation, as opposed to Jewish bondage.

It follows, then, infallibly, that the character, *ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*, has passed away in him whom "the truth makes free." Because *πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐστι δοῦλός τῆς ἁμαρτίας*. Doubtless there is a sense in which this effect is produced in every one who becomes a "disciple indeed." From the very time of his becoming such, sins, which would dissolve his tie with his Master, must necessarily cease. Yet, evidently, a farther enfranchisement remains to be aspired to; which, it appears, must be attained by degree and progress, because that knowledge of truth which is to work the effect, is itself gradual and progressive.

The freedom, then, of which our Lord speaks, is not that lower kind of liberation which is implied in the very essence of the state of grace ; for this is effected by grace itself, by that spiritually animating influence of which St. John speaks, when he says, ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος, after having, a little before, declared our Lord to be πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας : and, accordingly, St. John speaks of the reception of grace only ; as if to intimate that the fulness of truth was to be participated in, in another way, and by an after process. But the freedom contemplated by our Lord seems rather to be the full-grown blessedness of those “τελείων,” whose portion is ἡ στερεὰ τροφή ; and who, in beautiful similarity to our Lord’s idea of truth setting free, are described as οἱ διὰ τὴν ἔξιν τὰ αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα ἔχοντες πρὸς διάκρισιν καλοῦ τε καὶ κήκοῦ (Heb. v. 14) ; that is, having so long and faithfully applied themselves to the study prescribed (Phil. iv. 8), as to have wrought the results into their very nature ; and to have made right discernment, in every practical instance, a matter of fact, not of ratiocination : of which attainment, I believe, the delight, the daily and hourly delight, is inconceivable, except by those who possess it. It is the perfection of “the peace of God which passeth all understanding :” it is George Herbert’s “perfect freedom.”

“The unlearned man,” says Lord Bacon, “knows not what it is to descend into himself, or to call himself to account ; nor the pleasure of that *suavissima vita, indies sentire se fieri meliorem*. Whereas, with the learned man it fares otherwise,

that he doth ever intermix the correction and amendment of his mind, with the use and employment thereof. Nay, further, in general and in sum, certain it is that *veritas* and *bonitas* differ but as the seal and the print : for truth prints goodness ; and they be the clouds of error, which descend in the storms of passions and perturbations." Keep in mind, in reading this, that, in the Gospel, goodness is not the term for virtue generally, but for mature virtue.

Doddridge supposes that there have been minor inspirations. I think this of Bacon bespeaks such an origin ; and, also, the beautiful beginning of Hierocles, to which I particularly refer you, as an invaluable elucidation of our Lord's divine philosophy in that same stanza.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR —,

Tuesday, 26 April, 1822.

* * * I should think it likely that the Lord Lieutenant will not go to St. Peter's, except he be specially urged thereto by the Bishop of —, who, I suppose, will not wish that his friend's labours should not have their full reward. In writing about these things, I feel as if I were not in my element. It is hard to say anything on such a subject, without annoying, and almost soiling, one's own mind. What a well chosen expression is that in the Litany, "the *deceits* of the world, the

flesh, and the devil!" There is, surely, no petition more necessary for those who are in any kind of contact with the concerns of this life. Even I, who have so long been a hermit, have felt, and still feel, my urgent need of *continually making it my own*.

I had not room to say all I wished on that beautiful passage in Philippians, iv. 8, &c. And we really are bound to exercise, in the very first instance, the precept of St. Paul, *ταῦτα λογίζεσθε*, in his own admirable enumeration; the most striking feature of which is the "*callida junctura*," though that cannot exceed the happy choice of the individual terms. The votary of truth, sometimes, thinks that, as such, he has a right to be *brusque*, and regardless of delicacy. Therefore attention must be given, not only to the *ὅσα ἀληθῆ*, but also to the *ὅσα σεμνά*. Again, there may be a danger of resting in the *matter* of right conduct without going closely into its motives. Self, for example, may be really at the bottom of conduct, to appearance, fair and laudable. Therefore, to *ὅσα δίκαια* is adjoined *ὅσα ἀγνά*. Things are not as they should be, if they are not as pure within as they are specious without. Thus, according to St. James, even to "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" is not *ῥησκαία καθαρά καὶ ἀμίαντος*, if there be not also the *ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κοσμοῦ*.

At this point there seems to be a transition from things of a moral to things more of a social nature; in which the first care is given to those within the narrower circle, *ὅσα προσφιλῆ*; the tempers and conduct which attract the love of those in our

immediate society. But we must not stop here. We must so act as to be approved, not only by those who know us well, but by those also who know us slightly; so that it may be impossible for a casual observer, by mistaking us, to send abroad an unfavourable report of us: thus we are bound to consult *ὅσα εὐφημία*. As, elsewhere, “let not your good be evil spoken of.”

The two last terms are a comprehensive and consummating close. *Ἐἴ τις ἀρετὴ καὶ εἴ τις ἔπαινος*. The Apostle thus secures that no narrow limit shall ever be placed to his precept. *Τις ἀρετὴ καὶ τις ἔπαινος* include not only all that went before, but every possible thing of an analogous kind which can, at any time, occur. The adding of “any praise” to “any virtue” conveys, moreover, this important thought, that Christians are intended to attain great moral and mental strength; for a weak Christian can only be safe by shunning praise. How confirmed and full-grown, therefore, must he be who can seek what is praiseworthy, that men may be drawn to admire it for their own good, without wishing that their admiration may reach to himself!

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR —,

Sep. 5, 1822.

I THANK you cordially for your note of this morning. Mine of yesterday was not comfortable; but,

I thank God, I have been better to day. How far I may be substantially relieved, I do not know; but I have great reason to be thankful for such a day as I am now passing.

I am glad the books I sent have afforded pleasure to you. I do not think that time is ill employed in obtaining some systematized insight into any of God's wonderful works; and I cannot but consider those varieties in nature which have no other apparent end but to please the eye of the beholder, as evidence of benignant condescension in the great Creator, beyond what could be manifested in more important provisions. If one may dare to illustrate the ways of God by reference to those of man, it may be observed, that to attend only to utility is the mark of a dry, and somewhat severe, mind. But, where we see pleasure also consulted, and with care, and taste, and minuteness, we cannot but infer the good nature of the mind which has been thus considerate.

Alas! it has just struck seven; therefore I must close my remarks. My cordial love.

I am ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

Dawson Street, Sept. 8, 1822.

* * * I assure you I feel the want of my beloved Bellevûe friends fully as much as I ought; and I should doubt how I could live without them, were it not that Christianity forbids idols; and

that, whatever it enjoins, it gives strength to accomplish. The happy circumstance is, that it produces this effect, without taking a particle from the essence of the kindly feeling which it corrects. This is the peculiar beauty of Christianity; and it is, also, one of its deep mysteries. For, as human nature and human society are constructed, it might be asked, how can this be? how can the feeling be so nicely checked, as to preserve all that is good, all that is either pleasant or useful, and yet to free it from all that could be troublesome to others, or uncomfortable to ourselves?

To attain this temperament fully, is high Christian perfection: but it is a great blessing to have any of it; and it is a blessed thing even to seek it. This last is all I am yet sure of, as to myself; except that I humbly endeavour to rest on that promise, that they who seek shall find. And that it is attainable in the nature of things, and through the influences of the Gospel, St. Paul has nobly satisfied us in his *εμαθον* and his *μεμνημαι* (Phil. iv.) Yet, you see, this did not make him one atom less attached to his friends, or less joyful in the hope of seeing them again, after a separation.

— sat with me nearly two hours yesterday: I think he is a treasure. His heart is in his work; and he takes to it with a cordiality of which nineteen men out of twenty (professionally entitled) might not be capable. He is well qualified to teach the orphans something of the interior life; and, until this point is gained, there may be advantage, but there is no security. Had I time

and room, I should give you a quotation from Bishop Horsley, on what (he says in a speech in Parliament) the nuns (the poor emigrant females for whom he was pleading) "call the interior life." It is very curious and entertaining: but I must forbear.

My love to all my dear friends.

I am ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

Dawson Street, Sept. 10, 1822.

* * * A night without sleep is, certainly, not a pleasant thing; but even the transient slumbers, which I had toward morning (though, probably, the longest did not last fifteen minutes), make a mighty difference. And, also, I could not but compare my state with that of those whom racking pain kept awake; and I felt how thankful I should be that it was no worse. I was too unwell to think with continued connexion; but it is happy for the weak that that is not necessary to our thinking comfortably. That is the most comfortable thought which has most in it of the "*sursum corda*." God, in the book of Job, is said to "give songs in the night." He does so in proportion as he attracts the winged heart to himself; for then, like the lark, it sings as it rises.

"He, in these serenest hours,

Guides the intellectual powers;

And his Spirit doth infuse,
Sweeter far than midnight dews ;
Lifting all the thoughts above,
On the wings of faith and love."

Had I felt like Doddridge, my wakeful nights would have been much more than supportable: they would have been delicious.

I am not sure that I told you of Mr. ——— paying me a visit a few days after I came to town. He told me he was leaving it the next day; and, therefore, had come, on knowing I was in town. He sat above an hour; and surprised me by his prompt entering into solid conversation. I ventured, on occasion for it appearing, to tell him some of my views about future punishments (which, by the by, are the views, in effect, of Bishop Butler); namely, that no punitive act, on God's part, is necessary; for, that the wicked will punish themselves far more deeply than could be in any way of external infliction, inasmuch as their very apprehension of God must be that to them, which the receiving of the sunbeam is to the dead animal. "That," says he, "seems very just; and there is another very curious natural fact, very much of the same kind. The gastric juice, which, in the living animal, though it dissolves the nutriment, is perfectly innoxious to the stomach itself, as soon as the animal dies becomes as corrosive as aqua fortis, and actually eats through and dissolves the stomach itself." I could not but observe that this analogy completed the notion of moral misery, by picturing what man's own feelings, which he had drawn pleasure

from in life, would be to him after death, as the other analogy shewed what he would suffer from the God he had neglected." On the whole, he was wonderfully disposed to join in deep thought.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

Bellevue, Oct. 3d, 1822.

* * * Last night, I thank God, I slept well; that is, as well as usual. To-day, I am more bilious than for some days; but, probably, I am affected by the dampness of the day. My nerves are weak, and not yet returned to a natural state; but I have felt little actual nervous uneasiness since we parted.

I have been thinking of Dr. Cheyne's opinion; and I really do not wonder at his taking it up. There is, I am sure, a good deal of truth in it; though not all that he supposes. But, judging as he must do, by what he observes, and what I tell him, it is very natural for him to think as he does. I am, myself, assured, that if my mind were as I would wish it to be, my corporeal indisposition would greatly decrease. I have organic weaknesses, which no state of mind would radically cure; but I am sure that, if my spiritual feelings were as confirmed and equable as the view given in the New Testament, and the actual attainment of Christians in all ages and churches encourage me to hope, and warrant me to ask from God,

that they should be, I should, from that time, have little or no nervous uneasiness. Convinced of this, I must ascribe it to discernment in Dr. Cheyne, that he should think as he does; even though I may still apprehend that this view of his may go a little too far: for I impartially think, myself, that if the want of mental firmness increases my bodily weakness; so, on the other hand, the weak body stands, in some measure at least, in the way of mental improvement: though, on the whole, I cannot but trust that it is best I should be as I am. I am, I hope, in God's wise and gracious hands; and that is enough.

I am ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Oct. 31, 1822.

YOUR note, received this morning, was a cordial to me. I am delighted you are so well as you are; and, particularly, at your feeling something of progress. I learn from you, also, a lesson of equanimity. Your naturally temperate mind has aided you; but my nature has been the absolute reverse. Nothing but the influence of Heaven could bring me to that calm and steady and uniform self-possession with which you are blessed. I can only say, I do not despair of that influence. When I compare my present self with my former self, I am bound, thankfully, to acknowledge that, what I am anxious to possess, has, even already,

not wholly been withheld ; but, as yet, the little specimens of Christian good sense and sobriety which I perceive in myself, do not satisfy me, but only make me solicitous that they should grow into maturity.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Dec. 14, 1822.

* * * You see that passage exactly in the light in which it struck me. I doubt, however, if he well understood himself when he says that, since Deists have represented the supreme essence, “*Eternellement seul, l’Athée le cherche en vain dans cette vaste solitude.*” As you say, it is, at least, clumsily expressed ; and, in fact, the writer seems to have imagined much more than he has reflected. I, certainly, should wish the great doctrine of the Trinity to have a better expounder. But, until an adequate expounder shall be raised, I believe it would be a happy thing if the doctrine itself were carefully wrought into young minds. Deep and difficult as it may be in theory, it strikes me as having an invaluable influence in practice. It is, in the first place, the only preservative from virtual Arianism. The Redeemer, in the Gospel, has so familiarised himself with us, has so divested himself of that “glory which he had with the Father before the world was,” that he is liable to remain on that low level in the human mind, if a deeper belief of his essen-

tial Godhead be not the preservative from that false and pernicious habit. But to attain such belief, it will not be enough to impress this point of Christian faith by itself: it will be indispensable to establish the belief of the Trinity. For, if the Godhead of Christ be, simply and by itself, inculcated, it will, at the best, be admitted only gratuitously; and there being, in that case, no reason before the mind's eye, the assent which was gratuitously given, may be as gratuitously retracted. It is a mere habit, not a nature. It is lodged in the mind, like a stake in the ground: whereas, right belief is like a tree fastened by roots, which are also transmitters of nutriment. A right inculcation of the Trinity leads to this latter result, because it implies the Godhead of the Second Person, as of natural necessity; for it presents a Third Person, in order, coming after the *Λόγος*, whose Divine nature has never been obscured by a created intermedium, but who, while he comes before our minds with all the essential attributes of Deity, dwells still, as much as the Father himself, in a light which no man can approach unto. Though he has manifested himself, it has been only by a significant symbol; and he remains the object of our merely mental veneration. This necessary admission, therefore (I would rather say, this unavoidable recognition), of pure abstract Deity, in the after-place of the ever-blessed Triad, makes the habit of contemplating our Redeemer, in his inner nature, as "God over all," not gratuitous, but rationally indispensable. In fact, it introduces a habit of in-

tuitive, instead of merely argumentative, belief; and leads to a train of derivative habits, which, to enlarge on, would be a long business; and, therefore, not to be thought of when it has actually struck seven.

I may have written nonsense, for I cannot read over what I have written.

Believe me ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

* * * I am in doubt whether I shall be able to see you at the time I mentioned. I got cold, I fancy, yesterday at the Orphan House, by standing in the room where they dine without my perceiving that the windows were open; and, from that or some other cause, I have this day suffered under that bad headach which disables me from reading. Should this continue, I shall be fit for nothing but staying at home. If it pleases God that I grow better, I shall be happy to use my amended health according to your wish: but, really, I am just now rather low.

I took — with me to the Orphan House Chapel, with which he was greatly pleased. I like him very much: he is completely the brother of Mrs. —, with, possibly, a greater faculty of making himself happy. Good people ought always to be happy (except when “the corruptible body presseth down the incorruptible soul”); if they are

not, there must be either some error in their conceptions of things, or some fault in their mental organization. There are spiritual as well as secular Marthas, who are “careful and troubled,” religiously, “about many things.” But, in my poor opinion, Mary is, in every way, the object of imitation. It seems that St. Paul had Mary’s picture in his mind’s eye, when he declares the aim of his advice, in the 7th chap. of 1st Cor., to be, that those whom he addresses should “wait upon the Lord without distraction,” *πρὸς τὸ εὐπρόσεδρον τῷ Κυρίῳ ἀπερισπάστως*; literally, “in order to their sitting before the Lord in a happy position, without being dissipated:” that is, they may enjoy like Mary, without suffering like Martha: for it is said of Mary in St. Luke, x., that she was *παρακαθίσασα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (which was exactly *το εὐπρόσεδρον τῷ Κυρίῳ*); and of Martha, *Ἡ δὲ Μάρθα περιεσπᾶτο*; the strict opposite of which is *ἀπερισπάστως* (literally, without being drawn about).

You have betrayed me into sitting up too late: the watchman has just cried, “Past one.” Adieu.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

April 12, 1823.

I CANNOT defer acknowledging the receipt of your most acceptable note. Your report was, in every instance, interesting; and, with respect to ———, entertaining and gratifying. In ———’s remark

there is a great deal of that turn of mind which, in actual life, is at once amiable and convenient, as having an appetite for an object of affection, without fastidiousness as to its qualities. Such go both pleasantly and popularly through the world; and they deserve the kindness they generally meet with. But, still, a little hardness to be pleased has its advantages.

Mr. — sat an hour with me this morning; and I scarcely know when, of late, I spent the same space of time more satisfactorily. Our conversation was, certainly, very solid; and the subject was deeply interesting. I happened to quote (drawn to it by something Mr. H. said) St. Paul's remarkable words, "by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." And I expressed an opinion that the two portions of the sentence referred, respectively, to the *ἐπιθυμίας* and the *παθήματα*, of which he had spoken as "crucified" in the true Christian, a few verses before. The world, I said, could no longer excite the *ἐπιθυμίας* of St. Paul, because it was crucified unto him; nor even disturb his *παθήματα*, because he was crucified to it.

Mr. H. disputed this distinction; and put me upon the proof. His objection, at first view, was at least plausible. He said, it appeared to him that the one implied the other; and that, therefore, the sentence seemed rather a very fit indulgence of rhetoric, than a philosophical enunciation.

I answered, that I would not deny the former position to be supposed by the latter; but that, I was persuaded, the converse was not the fact.

On the contrary, that the world might be substantially crucified to us, while we were not equally crucified to the world: that is, though it could not excite our desires, it might still be able to wound our feelings. For even he who has sincerely renounced every worldly pursuit, may, notwithstanding, suffer a pang from “the proud man’s contumely.”

Mr. H. felt some force in this statement; but he required fuller elucidation. I, therefore, directed his attention to Phil. iii. 10, where the order of ideas is remarkable. 1. *Τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ*; 2. *Τὴν κοινωνίαν τῶν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ*. Now, of the former, we have the import in Col. iii. 1: *Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε*. “The power,” therefore, “of Christ’s resurrection,” works directly upon the *ἐπιθυμιαί* in (as the 17th Article expresses it) “drawing up the mind to high and heavenly things.” But, notwithstanding this upward tendency, we shall be painfully, and, it may be, perniciously impeded, if we do not proceed to add to this happy propension the *κοινωνία τῶν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ*,—that Divine superiority to the rubs, and annoyances, and hard measures of this world, which was so ineffably exemplified in the dying circumstances of the great Ἀρχηγός; and which, I may add, he substantiated in his own person, with the view to profluent and perennial communication. Says St. John, Ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος.

I went on to elucidate my meaning by St. Paul’s ἔμαθον and his μεμύημαι, Phil. iv. 11, 12. And, at length, Mr. H. owned himself convinced that the first

quoted sentence was not rhetoric, but substantial practical verity.

Our conversation afterward, went forward upon some scarcely less important topics.

I am a little better to day ; but, I assure you, it is not from locality that I hope for amendment. I was too ill to continue at Bellevûe ; but I might have grown better there as well as here.

Ever yours,

A. K.

MY DEAR —,

Dawson Street, May 7th, 1823.

* * * * * I feel little mark of amendment on the whole ; though, sometimes for a day or two, I think I am gaining ground. But head-ach or bilious feelings of the stomach come back upon me, and undeceive me. Thus, after seeming improvement on Sunday and Monday, my head is so uneasy to day, that I am afraid to read a paragraph.

But I do not absolutely intend staying from Bellevûe until I am decidedly convalescent. When you all are so far convalescent as to bear an actual invalid in your society, I shall be strongly disposed to go to you, were it but for a few days. The inability to read is, after all, my most weighty trouble. Were I free in that respect, I should need very little patience to bear the rest. But, perhaps, if that were wanting, the correction would be too light to answer its gracious purpose. It is surely not unintelligible that we should be

chastened where we are sure to feel. And my love of reading makes this privation a sensible chastisement. I humbly hope that, when the end shall be answered (if in so frail and fluctuating a mind as mine it can, in the nature of things, be completely answered), the restraint will be removed; for, in my poor judgment, no unnecessary severity will ever be exercised by the infinitely benignant Deity.

Is it not strange that the contemplation of Deity in the Psalms should be so much more cheerful, fiducial, and even familiar, than that which seems to be admitted by the generality of sincere Christians? The feelings of depression under trials are poignant; but the returns of confidence and comfort are replete with the brightest exhilaration. And the piety itself, when in its natural exercise, is perfectly of this latter character. It is, truly and strictly, the sunshine of the breast; and it unites, as by natural congeniality, with all that is gay, and radiant, and beautiful, in the external creation. The 104th Psalm is a full exemplification of this delightful sympathy; and numberless instances of the same kind meet us in every part of that Divine collection.

We may, however, safely affirm, that the Gospel itself does not fall short of this, its most direct anticipation, let its cheerful character be ever so much overlooked by its honest, but half-informed votaries. Our Redeemer's "well of water" (St. John, iv.), is exactly the same idea with "the well of life," in the 36th Psalm. And the "piping and dancing," by which He is pleased to elucidate his

own special training, as contradistinguished from that of "the voice which cried (and, I conceive, still crieth) in the wilderness," cannot be less grateful to our true native tastes, than the best melodies of even the sweet singer of Israel.

Ever yours,

A. K.

TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Sunday, May 8, 1823.

As to what you say of my stay in Dublin, I hope it is most true. I cannot, with all my boding temper, deny the improvement which has taken place in me. In fact, the regular quiet course, and, I may say, regimen, which I observed, and from which there was no temptation or liability to swerve, seems to have been most fitting for my state, both of body and mind; and I trust I shall take care to manage myself still substantially in the same way.

Young — is a deep and thorough disciple of his uncle. Their view of things seems most comfortable to themselves; but it can be so to none who do not unreservedly embrace it: for, in itself, it appears (to me, at least) alike repulsive to the understanding and to the heart. I presumed not to combat it; I merely maintained that to adopt it was not essential to salvation. I went thus far in my own defence; feeling, at the same time, that I had the whole body of travellers in "the

old paths," to keep me in countenance. But it signified nothing. It seemed that all would be built on the sand, if I did not lay their foundation. "I think," says young ———, "that you and my uncle differ in this; that you suppose only one thing to be necessary, namely, inward and spiritual rectification of heart, while he supposes another thing to be also necessary, namely, the reception of certain speculative dogmas into the understanding." "You are exactly right," answered I; "you take the thing as it really is; and you'll observe that our Lord has said, 'One thing is needful.'" It seemed as if he did not quite like the opening he had given for this remark, for he said something as if to fence himself; but what it was, I forget, as we were then standing on our feet. I had not the slightest wish to disturb the young man in his belief, had I even been able (which I am sure I should not have been). It pleases Providence to permit, if not order, a great variety in the way of taking up religion; and I have no doubt that, except in peculiar instances, it is best that individuals should be suffered, without molestation, to proceed as they have begun.

* * * * *

Ever yours,

A. K.

TO ———.

MY DEAR ———, Bellevûe, Sept. 26, 1823.

You will not wonder at my omission of writing, when I tell you that, since I wrote my last letter

to you, I have not read a single paragraph. And, when I shall be able to use my eye in that way, I cannot yet conjecture.

I am thankful to Divine Providence that, were I to enter into ever so many particulars, I should have nothing to tell you with which you would not be pleased. Your * * * *

The little —— is an interesting infant: it looks, and smiles, and makes queer movements with its mouth, as if it knew what was going on about it. It has a nose, I think, very like its father's; and its little face seems strongly marked with intelligence.

I could wish you to say much for me at the place where I expect this note will find you. But if my eye is not made uneasy by what I am now doing, I will write a note to Sir Thomas Acland, for I have recollected there was something I ought to have said when I wrote to him, and rather strangely forgot it; you must know, some one told Mrs. More, that "even Alexander Knox had acknowledged that the time was now past to give power to the Roman Catholics;" and Sir T. A. wrote, in no little wonderment, to know from myself the truth of the statement. You know what I could say in answer. But it is strange how any one could have so misconceived me.

Dreams are curious things. I thought last night or this morning, that I was talking to a sensible Roman Catholic (a being of my own imagination), and that I said to him, "for my part, I am neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant, but a Christian of the six first centuries." This fancy

was, at least, not far from the fact. It is as true of the Church of England as of me, her humble and attached member.

I will not attempt more. Give my love to ———, and believe me, whether speaking or silent,

Invariably yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

November 19, 1823.

I, AT length, enclose you my reply to Mrs. ———'s note. It is but a poor attempt, even in its matter, to afford what I could have wished. The manner in which my eye obliges me to write, is not more friendly to thought than to penmanship. It is not possible to use the mind with ease, when such an organ as the eye may, every now and then, be suspected of being in jeopardy. I thought it better, however, to give something than nothing, though I dare not flatter myself that it will prove satisfactory.

Be that as it may (though to think that I had really aided Mrs. ——— would give me deep gratification), what I have said of the Church of England, I have said with all my heart. I am now declining into the vale of life; indeed, I am fairly in it. What, then, should I do for support to my sinking nature, for establishment of my spirit against the growing weakness of my body, if, in the greatest of all concerns, I had a doubt of the line I had taken, or of the ground on which I

now stand ? Satisfaction in this great business can only arise radically from conscious rectitude of heart, produced in us through the influences of Divine grace. But this is not enough for a mind in full operation ; I mean, that reasons as well as feels. There must be satisfaction to the understanding, as well as to the conscience, in order to make even the path through life safe and comfortable ; and, still more, to cheer our heart “ in the dark and cloudy day ” which is approaching. Now, how I should have any thing of this “ full assurance of understanding,” if there were not such a providential institute as the Church of England, I cannot conceive ;—the Church of England, I mean, as exhibited in the Common-Prayer Book throughout its public devotional forms. We have here, as it were, a mirror so admirably constructed, and so happily placed (not by man, but by the Father of Lights alone, for He alone was equal to such an effect), that it appears to receive the light of heaven, without those intervening obscurities and seeming confusion which, without a miracle, must ever perplex the mental vision of each direct and unassisted observer ; that is, unless he has been prepared for direct observation by a previous as well as concurrent use of that intermediary apparatus, whose reflected light is not less valuable for the warmth which it conveys than for the guidance which it affords.

This is, simply, my estimate of the Church of England ; founded on all I discover of its intrinsic nature, on all I know of its historical circumstances, on the specific excellence of such human

characters as have been formed under its influence, (to whom I know none comparable in later times, and none superior since the Apostles); and, lastly, on the palpable necessity of exactly such a guidance, in a time like the present, which answers, beyond parallel, to the state supposed in Ephes. iv. 14, and which would be alike puzzling and portentous, if there were no satisfactory means provided by overruling Providence, for the present benefit of such as come within St. Paul's description of ἀληθευόντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, as well as for an eventual reduction to order of the now increasing moral chaos. For instance, I am told that Mr. ———, of ———, after a course of conspicuous activity in schools, &c. has lately left the Church of England, and avowed himself a Walkerite.

I am not sure, however, after all, that I may have met the points on which Mrs. ——— wishes for information. She may, perhaps, desire satisfaction respecting the legitimacy of our Church-government, and the integrity of our episcopacy in our present state of separation from the great mass of the unaltered Western Church. If Mrs. ———'s mind turns to this subject, I can only say, I wish I could satisfy her as much as I am satisfied myself; but an actual discourse upon the point would be equally overwhelming to the writer and the reader. Briefly, we have only separated from the unreformed Church, because she rejected us on account of our exercising the duty as well as right of a national Church to examine its own conduct, retrace its erroneous steps, and recur to uncorrupted antiquity for its standard of correction. The

Church of England claimed nothing more: and, for maintaining this claim, she has been excommunicated. But the thirtieth English Canon proves that she does not excommunicate in return. This single consideration of the case (together with the intrinsic evidence on which I have dwelt) appears to me to make it unnecessary, except for fair and laudable curiosity, to pursue that inquiry any further.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

April 13, 1824.

* * * I really think Burnet's two first books an interesting sequel to Clarendon. Only I fear Mr. La Touche would not bear his prosing style. I mean, that it would put him asleep.* I do not well know how to describe Burnet's manner; but, certainly, after the gracefulness and delicacy of Clarendon, it appears to great disadvantage. I really believe, that the two qualities I have ascribed to Clarendon are exactly those which Burnet wants. I am entertained more than I am pleased by him. He is intelligent and conscientious; perspicacious as to characters, and strong in delineating them; but he is so inferior to Clarendon in this respect, that, just after the latter, the full merit of Burnet may, possibly, not be felt. He was more a generical Christian than

* An occurrence not very unreasonably apprehended in the case of a hearer of Burnet's History, at the age of ninety-one.

a specifical Churchman. Still, however, I could wish you to read those two first books, both as giving valuable notes on Clarendon, and carrying you forward into the consequences of those momentous events with which Clarendon concludes.

Michael is very kind to me. He reads to me full three hours every day; and his being interested by it himself does not lessen my obligation. I can perceive, however, that he does not enter into Burnet as he entered into Clarendon. One reason may be, that Burnet is inexorable to the "Papists." I am free to say, no wonder that he was. But Burnet had a poor idea of the "double moat."*

My love, my dear friends.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

May 16, 1824.

* * * I do not know whether you happened to observe in the *Eclectic Review*, that the first article is a new publication of letters by Cowper, which his biographer did not think fit to be inserted. I saw the publication, yesterday, in Milliken's shop—two octavo volumes. Miss F. has read the review of them to me; and I think, from the specimens, that Hayley was very right in withholding some of them, and wrong in not giving others. Most of them, I should think, are mere expressions of mental misery, which can afford

* *Vide* George Herbert's Poem on the British Church.

neither profit nor pleasure; but some of them, which the review gives, throw very satisfactory light on his engaging in the translation of Homer; and make it seem as if he were led to it by the hand of Providence. Those letters are certainly interesting in another point of view (I, of course, judge only from the few specimens); they evidence the piety which remained with him in his deepest depressions. This is so clear from his mode of speaking of God, religion, and himself, as to persuade (I should say, convince) us that his radical feelings rather gained than lost by the strange darkness of his mind. Perhaps, had I the power of reading, I should now have those two volumes in my possession. But, as I am, I have no motive; and I am satisfied to be thus taught forbearance. "Bear and forbear," you know, are the kernel of old philosophy.

I have borrowed Clarendon from Milliken; and Michael reads it to me. This ninth book is "wondrous pitiful." Poor Charles! How "sinned against" in every way! His professing friends far worse than his open enemies. What a wretch that Goring was!

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Sept. 30th, 1824.

I RECEIVED your two notes and the parcel on Tuesday night; and, you may suppose, after all my little trouble, I was glad to see them in a produceable form. Though they were not to ap-

pear before the public, I have had serious solicitude about the reception of what I had done, even by friends; and it was pleasant to me, at last, to see that point was on the eve of being decided.

I must, however, acknowledge that some confidence has been given me by the opinion of the Bishop of Limerick. I had one fair copy of the sheets which had been sent me, and I put it into his hands. He was prevented from seeing me just before he went off; and therefore he wrote to me what he thought. I transcribe that part of his note, as I know it will please you:—

“I shall be anxious to receive a complete copy of your thoughts on the Eucharistic symbols. My opinion is, that into the small compass of the pages now in my hands, you have compressed more good sense and sound theology than are contained in any ten bulky volumes of former writers on the subject. I particularly admire your clearness and freedom from all intricacy and in-volution.”

To you, who know how unreserved a critic he has always been of what I put into his hands, and, surely, not more in substance than was just and friendly, this testimony will appear very satisfactory. It is exactly such a case as might be referred to his judgment as suitably as to that of any man in the present world; and, therefore, you will not wonder that such a strong and full approbation sets me very much at ease.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Jan. 5, 1825.

* * * We are in strange times. Little should I fear fifty O'Connells, and as many Cobbetts, if I could hope our men at the helm had skill to navigate the vessel through the tempest. But, alas! some of them are doing in earnest what sailors do sometimes in folly—"whistling for a wind." It is the breath of our legislators which fills the sails of the seditious. It is, if I see at all, Lord Liverpool, Lord Eldon, and Mr. Peel, on one side, and Sir John Newport, &c. &c. &c. on the other, that are giving our Irish malcontents all their power of doing mischief.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Jan. 19, 1825.

* * * I have now read three chapters in Mrs. More's book. It proves the excellent intentions of the author: the last paragraph I have read gives evidence of her sincere piety. And of its contents one may say, "whoso doeth these things shall never fall." * * * I, however, suspect the whole little volume does not contain as much as any one stanza, or half stanza, of George Herbert's poem.* If he had fixed his

* On Prayer.

mental eye as exclusively as Hannah More on man's mental maladies, and as much overlooked the capabilities of his nature, he never could have "known the way to Heaven's door" himself, or have so shewn it to others. * * *

Were my case that described in the 32d and 33d pages, I should be very miserable! What should I have done during the last eleven weeks? Luther used to say, and it was not one of his worst sayings, that prayer was, as it were, the leeches of his troubles. But, were this all, it would be a poor thing. The dim dawn of prayer with which I am acquainted, teaches me that its meridian light is, itself, the dawn of heaven.

Of one thing I am certain: the heart of man does coalesce with Divine things far more naturally than Mrs. More supposes. Its heavenward instinct is weighed down by native animality, and bound down by contracted pravity; but, when Divine mercy enfranchises it, and Divine grace gives it wings, the region of peace, into which it is brought by the guidance of the Paraclete, is felt unutterably to be its own natural rest; that for which it was destined by every character of its inward frame, and that for which it blindly panted in all its wanderings. God be praised! I know thus much to be true.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR _____,

Jan. 22, 1825.

* * * I think you mean the passage of St. Chrysostom which I once gave you ; and which begins thus :—“Οὐδὲν κωλύει τόπος, οὐδὲν ἐμποδίζει καιρὸς,” &c. This very passage is referred to, and in some sort quoted, by Bridaine. After saying, “Que vous faut-il donc pour prier ? Mes frères, il ne faut qu’une âme, un esprit, un cœur ;” and, after shewing what kind of soul, and mind, and heart, he means, he says, “Mais ce qui doit vous faire trouver la prière encore plus aisée, par rapport à vous, c’est que vous pouvez prier en tout temps, en tout lieu, dans toutes les circonstances de la vie ; parceque, après tout, Dieu n’a pas besoin de nos voix, de l’inclination de nos corps, et de l’extension de nos mains ; et qu’il ne réclame que l’affection de nos cœurs et la droiture de nos intentions.” Then, after instances of Esther on her throne, Daniel in the lions’ den, Hezekiah on his bed, and St. Paul in the prison at Philippi, he adds, “Ainsi pouvez-vous prier vous-mêmes, vous dit St. Chrysostome. Dans quelque état, dans quelque condition, dans quelque conjoncture de la vie, que vous vous trouviez, rien ne vous empêche de vaquer à ce saint et doux exercice.”

Do you remember my giving you a passage from Hugo de Sancto Victore ? I have got his works since I came to town ; and I find them what I expected. I’ll give you a further specimen of him :—“Talem te præpara, ut tecum adsit Deus ; sit in ore, sit in corde ; semper tecum eat, tecum

redeat, nec recedat à te. Nunquam ille te dimittet, nisi prior illum dimiseris. Ubicunque fueris, nunquam solus esse poteris, si Deus tecum erit."

I think I see the real faults of the Roman Catholic Church as plainly as my neighbours. But the culture of ancient faith and piety which has been kept up in it, covers, in my eyes (though it does not do away), "a multitude of sins." I put nothing in the most distant competition with the inestimable Scripture; but, how delightful and solidly satisfactory is it to have an unbroken and undisturbed exemplification of that inward religion which the New Testament promulgates, maintaining itself, in spite of changes in the world and circumstantial corruptions in the Church, through the darkest down to the present times—even to Bridaine! What a guard and support against religious fanaticism on the one hand, and frigidity on the other! Adieu,

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

January 25, 1825.

* * * The article in the Quarterly Review had attracted my immediate attention; and I read it with regret and indignation. I saw at once, as you did, that it came from the same hand as the article on Cowper's Letters; and I should suppose that Southey's Life of Wesley had been also reviewed by the same person. I cannot think that — is he. And, yet, a closer agreement in

opinion could not be imagined. You may well call his spirit Pelagian. I even think that he could not consistently stop there. Rather, in fact (could he establish his principles), not revealed religion merely, but natural religion also would fall before them. Divine grace is the vital principle of the one; Divine providence is, equally, that of the other. But Divine grace is an empty sound, if the love of God which is felt by the Christian be not distinguishable from the common result of human principles and motives. One might, then, say of the Gospel

Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu ?

But this poisonous position brings its own antidote in the arrant nonsense of its terms. Could he explain a love of God proceeding from human principles and motives! Cicero, with infinitely greater consistency, supposes that, to qualify man for being moral, he is originally endowed with something Divine! “*Qui se ipse nôrit, primum, aliquid sentiet se habere divinum.*” But, after supposing the highest possible improvement of this heavenly gift, in every moral instance, and the most comprehensive speculation, how modestly does he speak of the approach thus made to the Supreme Being!—“*ipsum ea moderantem pœne prehenderet.*” * Yet, to what a height has this finely imagined character risen above mere “human principles and motives!” And, how much more akin to Christianity is Cicero’s “*magnificentia*

* If, haply, they may feel after him, and find him.

rerum," than what anti-fanatical churchmen are now putting forth as Church of England doctrine!

But this hero attacks providence as confidently as he attacks grace; yet observe how awkwardly he strikes. He does not expressly deny special providence, but with a cautious "perhaps," he confines it to "corrective" dispensations. But what room has he left even for these, if, by general providence, not only "virtue is its own reward," but "vice its own punishment?" The "corrective," as well as the "distributive" department is here equally preoccupied; and special providence reduced to a name. Thus, the whole scheme of this world would be nothing more than a great and stupendous automaton. The framer of which it may be impossible not to admire; but with whom, in our daily concerns, and the course of our lives, we have no more directly to do, than we should have with a clockmaker who had furnished us with a clock which went so well as never to require its maker's interference.

The practical result from these wretched doctrines is, that there is no room for prayer. If there be neither grace nor providence, we have nothing to ask for either soul or body, because we have absolutely nothing to expect for the one or the other. This is altogether too bad. I only hope God will bring good out of the evil.

You gave me a subject, and I have talked of almost nothing else.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO —.

MY DEAR —,

January 27, 1825.

* * * * * Mr. — sat a while with me yesterday; and I found that he had been first called in to see Mrs. —, but that his talk with her had little or no effect, and that then Mr. — was brought, who seemed to engage and cheer him in a surprising manner. Nothing could be more unselfish than —'s manner of telling this. It seemed as if he himself was quite sensible it must be so, considering their different modes of speaking. And he rejoiced that there was one better fitted for the occasion, to supply his lack of service.

A brilliant dying scene is, doubtless, an anodyne to the hearts which are lacerated by the privation, and which may need something palpable to inspire comfort. But, though ebullitions of delight at that moment when human nature, left to itself, would be most desolate, are impressive and interesting, I am so much attached to sobriety, that I think I should derive more pleasure from seeing a dying person completely and deeply at ease, than from seeing one joyous. There could be nothing fallacious in the case adverted to; but joyous feelings are in themselves fallacious. Even in the New Testament itself, there is not a finer expression than *Ἡ εἰρηνὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἣ ὑπερέχουσιν πάντα νοῦν.* I doubt not that the poor dear lady had this, and this was the "one thing needful" at that hour.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

March 17, 1825.

* * * * * A return of this day is beginning to be a solemn sort of thing to me. To be entering on the sixty-eighth year, is a fact which must be felt where there is right reason or sound feeling. But, on the whole, I would not wish to be a year younger. The evening of my life has, I thank God, nothing in it to make me feel the slightest regret for the past; and it has wonderfully much in it to make me thankful both for past and present, and to trust the same gracious mercy and kindness for whatever is yet to come.

* * * * *

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO LADY——.

MY DEAR LADY ——,

March 24, 1825.

I TOLD you, in the few lines I last wrote to you, that I hoped shortly to say something more. The truth is, you brought a subject before me with which my mind has been always more or less occupied, and to which I never advert but with the most cordial interest and firm persuasion.

The concern felt by spirits in Paradise for their connexions on earth, is the subject to which I refer. What you feel with respect to your excellent father has always impressed me with respect to mine. I suffered that loss when I was twelve years

old, which you sustained at so much later a time. But it seems to me that, during the fifty-five years which have now very nearly passed, I have been reaping the advantages of paternal solicitude far more completely than I might have derived from my father's longest possible continuance on earth. In fact, I am inclined to think that a parent in Paradise can do for a beloved child far more effectual service than the best and wisest care could accomplish on this earth. This is a point, undoubtedly, on which Holy Scripture does not give us direct information; and yet, without warrant of Holy Scripture, our speculations concerning the invisible world are only delusive fancies. But, that wisest of Calvinists, Jonathan Edwards, most soundly observes, that the Sacred Word reveals Divine truth to us not only by explicit declarations, but also by furnishing us with clear premises, from which we are enabled to draw obvious and necessary conclusions.

In this latter way, then, I think we may learn much from the New Testament respecting the invisible world; and I must say, that there is no conclusion in which I rest with more entire certainty, than that the spirits of just men made perfect are more perfectly acquainted than ever with the transactions of this earth. If they know things here at all, they must know them more perfectly, considering their extension of view, and their being no longer liable to the errors of mortality.

That they know what takes place on earth, is obvious from the words ascribed by our Lord to Abraham in the account of the rich man and

Lazarus. It may be said, that this is a parable; perhaps it may, though I should think the express mention of the beggar's name gives it rather the stamp of actual facts. Be that as it may, we are bound to receive implicitly our Saviour's representations of the unseen world, and, of consequence, to believe, on his assurance, that Abraham was acquainted with all the events of the Jewish dispensation, and thoroughly understood the import at once both of the Law and the Prophets. The very few words which our Saviour puts into the mouth of Abraham, give us a world of information with respect to the knowledge of beatified spirits; for, he who thus spoke of Moses and the Prophets, and ascribed to them a more impressive moral power than to a reappearance from the dead, shewed a deeper knowledge of the human mind, and of the moral nature of man, than was, as yet, likely to be possessed by any living mortal. And it is also evident that, in order to form such an estimate, Abraham must have been an accurate and interested observer of the entire Divine conduct towards his descendants, and of the effects of that conduct on their dispositions and practice.

We are necessarily led to a similar conclusion by the account of the conversation between our Lord and Moses and Elias on the mount of transfiguration. We are told by St. Luke, that they talked to our Lord of his decease which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. They also, therefore, must have been perfectly acquainted with the entire economy of Providence in this lower world, and especially with the profound import of prophecy,

else they would have been incompetent to that mysterious subject—a subject which we see our Lord's Apostles could not conceive, even after all the advantage of his Divine instructions. The objection, besides, which has been sometimes made (I think most frivolously) to the former instance, of its being a parable, cannot be pretended here. A fact is distinctly described to us, and, consequently, affords an irrefragable ground for practical deduction. The knowledge of earthly affairs which the Old Testament saints possessed, and the intercourse with earth which that knowledge supposed, and their appearance on Mount Tabor exemplified, cannot in reason be confined to themselves alone. There was, doubtless, a propriety in those two individuals being, on that occasion, selected from the great assembly of beatified spirits; but, there would be no consistency in supposing that the information by which they were qualified for that interview was not possessed by all the departed luminaries of preceding generations, both Jewish and Patriarchal.

If there were no other evidence of the saints in Paradise having accurate knowledge of all that passes upon earth, and taking interest in human concerns, the two passages of Scripture which I have adduced would sufficiently settle the question. But it may be asserted, that wherever the invisible world is so referred to as to give occasion for such an intimation, the intimacy of intercourse with this visible world is, in one way or other, continually notified.

Thus, we are clearly and repeatedly taught that

the angels are incessantly occupied with us and our concerns; that the good angels are all ministering spirits, and that they take so minute an interest in human happiness as to rejoice at the repentance of a single sinner. We are assured by St. Paul (Ephes. iii. 10.), that, in the mysterious arrangements of the Christian Church, one special end is that, by means thereof, the principalities and powers in heavenly places may be adequately acquainted with God's manifold wisdom; and, therefore, not merely their philanthropy, but their own improvement and happiness, must ensure their attention to all the vicissitudes of human life, individual as well as collective.

But, can we ascribe this knowledge to angels, and not suppose it possessed also by the spirits of the just? The intercourse of the latter with the angels evidently commences as soon as the spirit leaves the body; for, when the "beggar died," he "was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." And what could be more natural, than that the kindness which had been exercised by ministering spirits to good and virtuous persons in the body, should still more perceptibly manifest itself when the human spirit was enlarged from its corporeal prison? But this commencement must lead to a continual freedom of communication. The angels who convey the spirits of the just to Paradise, are, for that very reason,—if there were no other,—frequent visitants of that happy mansion; and, therefore, were it only through them, its inhabitants must have constant information of what passes on earth. But, I think, we cannot suppose

this the sole medium of their knowledge; for to imagine them debarred from obtaining it for themselves, would be to view Paradise as a prison rather than as a mansion of bliss. A single word, however, which is used by our Lord, casts, in my mind, a flood of light on this subject: I mean, when speaking of the spirits of the just, he says—“They shall be as the angels of God.” On the ground, therefore, of this infallible oracle, we must conclude, that they participate in the same freedom of range, in the same feelings of philanthropy, in the same contemplation of the manifold wisdom of God, and in the same enjoyment of individual as well as general improvements and happiness.

That the affections which grow out of the relations formed on earth lose nothing but their weakness and alloy, we might sufficiently infer from the facts already adverted to. But, even on this particular point there are decisive intimations. The beggar, we are told, was carried into Abraham's bosom; *i. e.* into the nearest and closest society with his great progenitor. Doubtless, it was because of his sonship by faith, and not merely by nature, that he was blessed with faithful Abraham; still the language of our Lord clearly implies that the moral qualifications did not absorb, but confirm and perfect, the natural relation. But, if the relation to Abraham subsisted, and was recognised; by parity of reason, there is, in that happy state, a subsistence and recognition of all similar forfeited relations. If the distant descendant was received into the bosom of Abraham, will he not

be as really, and still more intimately, received into the bosom of an immediate parent? And, if so, does the short interval between the death of a parent and the death of a child suspend parental affection? I may rather ask, is such a thing conceivable, if we suppose the spirits of the just to lose nothing by death, but the mere dross and feculence of mortality?

The dissolution of all merely animal ties does not affect this far higher species of connexion. In proportion as the spiritual life grows and becomes ascendant, it sublimates our natural affections, and forms them into Christian virtues; as such, they become the indelible properties of the immortal Spirit, having in them the essence of that charity which never faileth. I speak not of those dismal cases where this holy flame is unsupported by any kind of sympathy in the object; nor do I presume to inquire in what way Divine wisdom and goodness provides consolation for the affliction which in every such instance must be felt, we might suppose, even in Paradise. Leaving this matter, therefore, to the all-wise Disposer, I look to what is deducible equally from Scripture and reason—that where hearts united by a common tie (whether of consanguinity or friendship) are further united by a joint and mutual love of essential goodness, it is inconceivable that this rooted habit of the mind should be diminished or disturbed by the mere dissolution of the body.

The mutual kindness of Christian relations or friends, forms evidently the most intense exercise of the duty enjoined by the second great com-

mandment; and to be wanting in this feeling in the case of near connexions, is, according to St. Paul, to deny the faith, and be “worse than an infidel.” It is, besides, a habit of the heart, which enters into the inmost exercises of devotion, and becomes inseparably associated with all the satisfactions of the inner man. Let us think, then, what a decomposition of our entire mental nature it would imply, if these charities were to cease on our leaving the body—our change of sensations, on such a supposition, would amount to a loss in some sort of personal identity, and, if admitted to its consistent length, would throw our view of the future life into obscurity, which would destroy all distinctness of hope, and weaken the very noblest principle of present conduct.

But, I think, it would be unnecessary to reason on this subject, if due attention were given to a single sentence pronounced by our Redeemer (St. Luke, xvi. 9), “And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.”

Our Lord, you know, had just delivered the parable of the unjust steward, closing it with an expression of regret, that worldly persons should be, in their own way, so much more actively provident for the future, than those who are engaged in the highest of all pursuits, and have, therefore, so much stronger motives to secure a happy result by a wise improvement of all their present powers. From this weighty remark of a general nature, he proceeds to the instance which the parable more

directly served to illustrate ; and his lesson is, that as the unjust steward seized the opportunity, while his Lord's property was yet in his hands, to secure, by fraudulent but opportune services, a return of hospitable reception in his approaching day of necessity ; so Christians, when intrusted by the Lord of all with this world's goods (the object of the trust being in fact their own best profit), should be as sagacious in employing their temporary possessions for their future advantage, as that wicked man was, after his manner, sagacious in making his last acts of fraud serve as a provision for his subsequent exigencies.

Such, evidently, is the matter of the instruction ; but the terms in which our Lord conveys it, open a view into futurity as vast in its extent as it is engaging in its import — “ make to yourself friends,” he says, “ of ” (or, as it might be more exactly rendered, “ out of ”) “ the mammon of unrighteousness ” (that is, whatever portion of this world's wealth ye possess), “ that when ye fail ” (by the dissolution of your earthly tabernacle), “ they (the worthy persons whom you have attached to you by your kindness, and who have gone to the unseen world before you) may receive you into everlasting habitations,” (that is, may be vouchers, as it were, for the fitness of your reception into Paradise, and, if they do not share with ministering spirits in conducting you thither, may, at least, increase your joy by their greetings on your arrival).

The words, I conceive, may be fairly thus understood. If so, they seem to prove, that con-

nexions cemented by mutual virtue and goodness on earth, lose nothing of their strength or ardour in the disembodied state. The friends which are made here, prove equally attached hereafter, and are eager at the moment of reunion to evince their unaltered gratitude. There could have been no suspension of such a feeling during the interval; and, therefore, it must have been in virtual, and, for aught we can know, in some kind of actual exercise while its object was in the body. Such an inference is inevitable, if we allow to our Lord's expressions their simple and consistent import; and we have no just pretence for limiting that import, as it is only from such intimations that we can have any correct ideas of the invisible state.

But, a further inference from these words must be, that every other analogous connexion, which is animated by Christian virtue, equally survives the body, and retains its interest, as well as energy, in the spirits of the just made perfect. I ground this deduction on the obvious principle, that a continuance of gratitude in the future state, supposes the continuance of other congenial, and, especially, still more deeply rooted, affections. If the grateful sense of conferred kindness is retained, the charities of father, son, and brother, must be still more certainly retained: There is, in the latter, every thing contained in gratitude or in friendship, and there is much more besides. "Make to yourselves friends," says our Lord; and it is an inexpressible blessing that friends can be made for us, whether we make them for ourselves, or Providence, in a still higher and happier way, confers them upon

us. But where the natural, and particularly the parental, relation forms the basis of a mental and moral connexion, the tie is closer and more indissoluble by death, the connexions divinely made for us by the laws of nature, and raised into the highest form of Christian charity, by common feelings of religion, must, were it possible, be yet more indissoluble. If the consolations of Paradise do not abate the affections of a friend, neither will they lessen the solitudes of a parent; if merely grateful attachment lives and actuates in the unseen world, the love of a virtuous parent to a virtuous child will be, at least, equally permanent and equally operative.

In what manner this affection operates respecting its objects who are still inhabitants of earth, we certainly are not told; and silence on this head would seem to have been wise and necessary, when so much "will worship" was introduced into the Christian Church, on mere grounds of fancy or corrupt tradition. But there can be no possible reason why we should not connect the different notifications which it has pleased Divine wisdom to afford us, and soberly consider what probabilities we are warranted to deduce, not only from the import of each, but from the conjoint bearing of all.

On such a view, then, I cannot but account it morally certain, that the same intercession with God, for the happiness of a beloved object, which was exercised on earth, continues to be as really and intensely exercised in Paradise. This must be the case, if the same affection continues; for affection to any person must inspire wishes for

that person's welfare; and the wishes of a pious mind are uniformly and necessarily prayers to God. Even on earth, a wish would be either criminal or irrational, if deliberately conceived without respect to God. Such a thing, therefore, could not be in a beatified spirit; and, by necessity of nature, a wish for the moral happiness of an intelligent being, must ever be addressed, by him who knows how to form it, to the Supreme Benefactor, from whom alone proceeds every good and every perfect gift.

Possibly some modern Christians might take alarm at the supposition of the saints in Paradise interceding for their connexions on earth, as if the intercession of our Redeemer was thereby invaded. But, it should be considered, that this charge would equally apply to the intercession of Christians for each other in the present world. This practice we know, however, to be right; it is enjoined in Holy Scripture, and declared to be highly efficacious: are we not, therefore, warranted, by the fairest analogy, to believe that the "charity" which "never faileth," will, in its various degrees of intensity, exercise itself in still more animated aspirations in Paradise than on earth? And, as it is impossible to disprove its fitness, on what reasonable grounds can we suppose a diminution of its efficacy?

I am by no means singular in this comfortable persuasion (which, I think, I could shew to be countenanced by very direct intimation of Scripture); some of the soundest divines of the Reformation have confided in it as an acknowledged

truth. Thus, our own wisest reformer, Ridley, writes to Bradford :—“ Brother Bradford, as long as I shall understand thou art in thy journey, by God’s grace I shall call upon our Heavenly Father, for Christ’s sake, to let thee safely home; and then, good brother, speak you, and pray for the remnant which are to suffer for Christ’s sake, according to that thou then shalt know more clearly.”

I leave it to you to judge, whether the thought expressed in this last sentence is not inexpressibly interesting to those who are sure that they have attached friends, and beloved and loving parents, in that region of so much greater clearness and so much more elevated devotion. But, it is not only by their prayers for us that they may benefit us; the general facts of the ministry of angels, and of their continued intercourse with the departed spirits of the righteous, lead, I conceive, to a rational inference, that the former of these facts cannot be wholly uninfluenced by the latter. That kindly sympathies will be formed in those benignant intelligences toward the human objects of their care, even during their mortal life, and, in some instances, more intensely than in others, in proportion as their services are successful, and they perceive a growth of virtues congenial to their own, can hardly be questioned; and it would seem, that such congeniality was in no instance more likely to be recognised than in the case of an affectionate and worthy parent, the best happiness of whose children was a matter of deep solicitude and daily care. In such solicitude, and in such care, we must believe that ministering

angels never fail to take part; for, in no other instance can they find a feeling and a purpose more in consonance with their own office and nature. Can we doubt, that there will be something analogous to human friendship thus formed in the angelic mind, and that the offspring of such departed parents as are peculiarly beloved by the invisible agents of good, will be favoured with their peculiar attention and most cordial beneficence? The affection of the angel and the human spirit will then have become mutual and explicit; the wishes of the loving parent will not be unheeded or unfelt; and to assist effectually in realising them, will, surely, not yield less joy than the repentance of a sinner.

I have only room to say,
that I am ever yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO LADY ———.

MY DEAR LADY ———,

March, 1825.

* * * * I did indeed feel most sincerely for ———; and in the first aspect of it I thought it a melancholy case. But, when I found how humbly and piously he yielded up to the Divine order that fair provision which seemed to have been made for his domestic happiness, it seemed to me that he was even already gaining more from the sudden loss of his greatest earthly

comfort, than he could have derived from its continued and most unclouded possession; and, doubtless, it is in this way that the most engaging gratifications of life do the deepest and truest service. When attained, they take possession of the heart, and heighten the inward thirst for happiness, which they seem fitted to satisfy. Time generally dispels this dream; and the rose is, at least, felt to be accompanied by the thorn. This more common correction of Providence has its great use; for, if the world, as it is, has so much fascination, what would be its hold on us, were it less annoying and less delusive? But it appears, that a more exquisite process is employed, and, consequently, a more signal benefit intended, when the prospect of earthly happiness is at once withdrawn, before there was any feeling of its deficiencies. Where religion was in any sincerity regarded as a rule of conduct, it will, in that extremity of necessity, be resorted to as a support for the heart. And, in so applying ourselves to it, more acquaintance with its true influences may be gained in a single day, than in many years conscientiously spent, but not marked by any special trial.

That afflictions may improve the mind and heart, as calling into exercise Christian virtues already in substance possessed, I do not pretend to dispute; and I think it is in this view that writers are most disposed to consider them. But, in my opinion, the great providential end of privations and trials is to compel us, by felt necessity, to cleave more directly and more intensely to the

sole source of inward strength and comfort. The exigence, whatever it be, which obliges us to make God, unequivocally, our refuge, is invaluable, be it ever so painful : for we cannot, even by our most upright endeavours, give wings to our soul, or surmount the sluggishness of our animal nature. But, when our efforts are really honest, it is certain the Divine goodness never fails to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves ; and I believe that the chief method is to place us in such straits, that we must either sink, or be supported by Divine strength and consolation. We then learn to pray as we never prayed before ; and we are experimentally taught what our Redeemer meant when he said, “ My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. ”

It is good to be religious in any sincere degree ; it is good to fear God, and to regard the voice of conscience : but it is an unspeakable happiness to be drawn, by whatever means, into that inner sanctuary where, through daily and hourly converse of the heart with God, we may be more and more “ satisfied with the plenteousness ” of his “ house, and drink of ” his “ pleasures as out of a river. ”

And what crowns this consolation is, that the access to God, which is obtained through the pressure of affliction, when once really obtained, does not pass away when that pressure is removed. Though we seek the Divine influence from compulsion, the blessing, when found, will attract us to itself ; so that we may not afterward require the same corrective discipline, but retain, as our chief delight and treasure, what we had found our refuge

in the day of adversity. I will not say, that this is always the case; but I trust it is a general fact; and, wherever affliction leads to the settled habit of inward and spiritual prayer, I am sure it, at least, lays the foundation of present and everlasting peace. * * * *

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Saturday Evening, April 2, 1825.

* * * * I had not recollected, till I heard it begun yesterday, that the chapter in Genesis, to which Mr. ——— had referred in his sermon, was the first lesson for Good Friday. This application of it evidently shews in what light the leading transaction was viewed by those who arranged those proper lessons. I wish they had exercised as good judgment in all other instances. I cannot doubt for a moment that they regarded Isaac as the type of our Redeemer. To understand the typical import of this wonderful history in any other way, would involve it in a chaos of dissonances; but, though types are generally difficult in some respect or other, the meaning comes out well, in viewing Abraham as representing God the Father, who, in love to man (as Abraham, in love to God), gave his only begotten Son; and Isaac, giving himself up with only one question, as typifying the meekness and gentleness of our Lord, who also made but one expostulation, "Father, if it be possible," &c. It strikes me, that there is something inexpressibly beautiful in Abraham's

answer, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." It tells us, as much as a thousand words, what kind of person Isaac was, and accounts for our hearing no more from him. The exactness of the resemblance here is very striking: and his feeling, and Abraham's feeling, being what they were, he was virtually offered, and he virtually offered himself. For St. Paul says, that Abraham received him from the dead ἐν παραβολῇ.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAREST ———,

Bellevue, May 27, 1825.

* * * * What a blessing a sound understanding is! I apprehend one who really has it, cannot but be conscious of having it; and duly to appreciate and be grateful for such a blessing is, in my mind, perfectly consistent both with modesty and Christian humility. Christianity itself can be completely possessed and enjoyed only in proportion as the mind is at least capable of acquiring soundness, for soundness of mind (πνεῦμα σωφρονισμοῦ) is, according to St. Paul, one of the three vital elements of our holy religion. If, however, there were no modification of Christianity suited to lower orders, or lower stages of mind, it could not have been preserved in the world. And, till the world improves intellectually, such modifications must prevail; and a juster view must be,

comparatively, of rare occurrence. But, where it does occur, it is an invaluable distinction; and scarcely in any way does it more surely authenticate itself, than in respectful forbearance, and candid and even kind consideration toward those whose notions can be no other than such as their opportunities and connexions have given them.

I had a remarkably pleasant conversation with Mr. ———, after dinner yesterday, on a subject near akin to what I have been just saying. I had been reading passages to him and Mrs. ——— in the forenoon, which I had happened on in *Mad. de Sevigné's Letters*; some relating to Port Royal, and others to the death of the *Mareschal de Turenne*; on both which she says eloquent and interesting things, but mingled with levities discreditable to her moral character, and disgusting to moral taste. "But is it not strange," said Mr. ———, "that the court of any Christian prince should be such a thing as that of *Louis XIV.* was?" My answer was, "I should think it strange, indeed, that our court should become such a thing (not forgetting, however, what it had been, but persuading myself that I could reconcile all that with my position); but I do not think it strange, that the conduct of a court should be little restrained by either Roman Catholic Christianity, or by the forms of established Protestantism on the Continent; inasmuch as neither one nor the other can fairly and fully engage an unfettered and cultivated mind. The understanding and the imagination are the two perceptive faculties; and an

adequate vehicle of religion must, proportionally, consult both. The Roman Catholic system makes no provision for the understanding. Christianity, therefore, in that form, is ever liable to be despised and rejected by the man who claims to think for himself. It gives much to the imagination (not in the best way, however), but absolutely nothing to the understanding; it denies its rights, and professedly aims at their subjugation. The continental reformation, on the other hand (whether Lutheran or Calvinist), holds out something, such as it is, to the understanding, but nothing to the imagination. And the consequence is, that refined taste is as much repelled by the Lutheran and Calvinist religions, as the understanding is repelled by the Roman Catholic religion. Instances may be found of eminent laymen being really religious in the Roman Catholic Church, and a still greater number in Lutheran or Calvinist communities. But, I believe, it is in the Church of England (in which due and proportioned provision is made, both for understanding and imagination) that the closest, most unreserved, and most cordial union has existed between minds of the first order, and the Christian religion." "You have made it quite plain," said Mr. —, "and I really think, if that view were fully and clearly given to the public, it would make a great impression, and do much good."

God bless you, and

Believe me ever inexpressibly yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

Bellevûe, June 4, 1825.

* * * * Miss ———'s conversation was entertaining to me ; not from the matter or manner (for she is very plain-minded), but because it placed before me, in great simplicity, the present prevalent spirit of sectarian piety. And it seems to me, that Roman Catholics do not doat more on their infallible Church than those good people on a notional Church of their own,—consisting of those, in different denominations, who have adopted the same doctrinal language, and are engaged in the same active plans for diffusing what they conceive the true knowledge of our Saviour.

My object was, to shew that the Church recognised in the New Testament was not that supposed assembly or society of “ true believers,” but that it was a visible institute, into which baptism gave admission ; in which our Saviour had established a ministry of two orders ; and the design of which was, to receive all, and make as many as possible what they ought to be. I dare say I made little impression on her ; but, as I argued solely from the New Testament, she was obliged again and again to yield. The fact I dwelt upon was, the confessedly mixed state of the visible Church, even in the Apostles' days, which St. Paul represents as a great house in which are vessels, not of gold and silver only, but, also, of wood and clay ; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. But, “ besides,” said I, “ of whom did St. Paul

speaking, when he said he had none of like mind to Timothy; since all men sought their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ?" Were not those of whom he gave this bad report, professional Christians? But, if so, what other Church does St. Paul recognise than that very mixed society, in which "the Lord only" knows with certainty "them that are his;" but in which every member, as "naming the name of Christ," is bound by his principles to "depart from iniquity." She could say nothing against this: but, I suppose, her mind could not digest it. I understand, she and Mrs. — are to dine here to day; if so, I shall hear how far I was intelligible. I hope, at all events, that Mrs. — did understand, and, in some degree, relish what I said. It seems to me to flatter piety lamentably, to contemplate it as existing gregariously, rather than as operating individually, in the depth of each good man's heart and mind. Any class of human beings viewed collectively (be the supposed tests of distinction what they may), will be found a dim and fallacious mirror for reflecting the pure beams of the day-spring from on high.

The good sense and good feeling of — again and again compensate me for the density of our contemporaries. Yesterday, I had been reading a portion of Chrysostom, and, in conversation, I made his primitive doctrine my subject. I explained to him, that, by going back to Chrysostom, I found the very religion which the Church of England at this day exemplifies in her services. That, like the piety of our Prayer-book,

he is equally free from the unballasted spirit of indefinite Protestantism, and the crouching servility of the Roman Catholic religion. His sober and deep retention of the Catholic faith and piety, distinguishing him as much from the former, as his great, luminous, and soaring mind from the latter. To illustrate what I said, I read some passages from the French translation. Had I room, I could hardly refrain from giving you, at least, the substance of one fine passage which I read to him, on, "Ye are the light of the world; a city set upon a hill cannot be hid." The manner in which he exults in the fulfilment of these words, when four hundred years had not yet passed (scarcely more than three hundred and fifty from the full opening of Christianity), is, to my mind, magnificent.

I am ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO —.

MY DEAR —,

Bellevûe, Wednesday, July 6, 1825.

AGREEABLY to your kind wish, I hasten to tell you, that you decided exactly as I should have done in your place. I should have felt the same circumstantial annoyance, and yet have come to the same substantial conclusion. Precisely as you say, the accumulative method of administering (however clumsy) defaces only the beauty, but does not touch the essence, of the ordinance. It is such a thing as might, at any time of the Christian Church, have been ordered differently

in different places; and the established rule was, that those local peculiarities were to be quietly complied with. Hence a proverb, which I remember to have often heard in my early years:—“He that is at Rome should do as Rome does.” At the same time, this is no palliation of the actual irregularity. But that lies with the officiating clergyman, or the heads of the Church, and not at all with the communicants. It is their wisdom to view things as you viewed them, to fix the mind upon the substance, and admit no uneasiness on account of the altered circumstance, which is to be left to Providence and to those who are responsible.

This little unpleasant feeling, however, may serve to increase your satisfaction in the thought, that Providence has so effectually fenced us against alterations of real importance. This is the grand advantage of an established hierarchical Church; and, when the time shall come for estimating the powers of moral as well as physical machinery (with which last the present age is so occupied, and in which it has been so wonderfully successful), this vital superiority will be pleaded and urged with resistless force against the plan of independent Churchship which is so prevalent in the religious movements of the present day; and to which, it seems to me, that most of the modern pietists have a tendency, whether they continue in the Church, or professedly leave it. All this, however, may be the best (perhaps, the only) thing for the present day. But the existence and continued preservation of such an institution as

the Church of England, so satisfactory to the understanding, and so engaging and enriching to the heart, so incomparably estimable, and so externally and internally lovely, affords a pledge of better things to come; and, even in the mean time, to discerning minds, secures that very benefit which St. Paul so exquisitely describes, and which was never more needed than at the present day,—“that ye be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine and sleight of men, in cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” That such a thing should be raised and kept on the very margin and brink of tempestuous Protestantism, and yet in as pure distinctness from the unreformed hierarchy as our own Gibraltar from doubly subjugated Spain, is a result of Providence, as miraculous as it is delightful. It is a subject which, to my mind, never is exhausted. It is “the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.”

If men only thought of their religion as they think of their estates, they would feel the need and value of guaranteed continuity. They could not be rationally and cordially at ease in their own religious professions, without wishing them entailed, with all possible certainty, on posterity. But, were such an anxiety really awakened, would ephemeral conventicles, even at first view, appear to afford the means of allaying it? For, can any of the members of them tell what they themselves may be, seven years, or one year hence? Individuals may rise above the system, and, by their

own integrity of heart, obtain a moral establishment of mind. But these, I apprehend, are little more than exempt cases. The system itself is indefinite fluctuation, and so opposite to St. Paul's *Σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον καὶ συμβιβάζόμενον*, as to suggest a persuasion that, among the various providential uses of the sectarian plan, it was not the least that it should, by the strong contrast of its results, illustrate, and indirectly demonstrate, the worth and excellence of the hierarchical institution.

When once the subject of inward and experimental religion shall come to be philosophically studied, I think it will be seen, that to possess the sincerest religious principle, is, comparatively, a low thing, if it does not extend and deepen itself into a religious nature. Of this, you recollect Chrysostom's beautiful picture. Doubtless, what he describes is its fulness: but its very commencements are delightful; they introduce to that *suavissima vita*, in *dies sentire se fieri meliorem*. But stability within will hardly be gained, except through stability without. And each living stone in the mystical temple, in order to be at rest, must be assured of the settledness of the temple itself. It is in this rational tranquillity, I conceive, that moral tranquillity is alone likely to be attained: and your own favourite, Herbert (were there not a cloud of witnesses), would satisfy you that, in subserving this holy purpose, and in guiding to "perfect freedom" of mind and heart, the portion of the Catholic Church with which we are providentially connected is without a rival. I am

well assured that, in all sincere Christians, Sectarian or Catholic, "the work of righteousness will be peace." But, I firmly believe, that our special institution tends more than any other now upon earth to that "effect of righteousness," which is "quietness and assurance for ever."

I have indulged myself in giving you a thinking letter, and I thank you cordially for leading me to it. For your question set my mind abroad, and it has poured out beyond your asking. But, I persuade myself, not beyond your liking, if I have dealt fairly with the subject.

I am, inexpressibly, ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO J. S. HARFORD, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. HARFORD,

Bellevûe, Delgany,
Dec. 7, 1825.

If my long delay in writing to you had arisen from indifference, or even mere indolence, I should feel myself pained and embarrassed in now addressing you. Over and above my regard for you at all times, there was much in both your letters which I should have replied to and dwelt upon with most cordial interest, had I been master of my thoughts, and could I have entered into converse with you, disengaged from other pressing matter. But so it has happened, that a subject particularly near my heart had begun to occupy me before the date of your first letter; and only now gives me a respite, for it keeps still a powerful hold on my mind.

The truth is, I am able to do very little; and

especially where there is need of deliberate and close thinking. When so employed, my nerves become disturbed; and, if I do not speedily draw in the reins of thought, I suffer, at least, during the remainder of the day, and perhaps longer. What, therefore, I might have once executed in days, now requires weeks; and, particularly, where I am anxious to do justice to a subject, and to say nothing which, on reflection, I could wish to recall.

I am sure you will take my word for the simple truth of this apology. But, as I wish to stand well with you, and to have your idea of me unclouded, as far as possible, by the slightest shade, I will tell you in strict confidence, including Mrs. Harford alone, what was my occupation.

Something happened to occur to Mr. Southey relative to John Wesley, respecting which he wished to obtain satisfactory information. He sought for this at, what he thought, the most natural quarter, a leading person among the Methodists; but that person did not even answer his letter. A correspondent of Mr. Southey's, who is also an acquaintance of mine, mentioned me to him; and, through that person, I was requested to make a statement of the impressions which my intercourse with Mr. Wesley had left upon my mind.

I need not tell you that such a call was, to me, irresistible; but you will easily conceive that it required the utmost caution so to express my testimony as to raise Mr. Southey's estimate of Mr. Wesley consistently with the general idea he had already formed. The high qualities which he

ascribes to Mr. W. made it easy for me to ground myself on Mr. Southey's admissions. But the extent of his censures (sometimes too well deserved, at other times, as I think, arising from misconception) made it necessary for me to guard my steps, not only that I might not offend in the first instance, but that I might open a way for offering some corrective observations. These, while my mind was full of the subject, I could not but prepare; and they, too, required much time and thought. They are yet, however, in a crude state. In the mean time, I have the satisfaction of knowing, by a kind and interesting letter from Mr. Southey himself, that my first communication has been as well received as I could wish; and that he is most ready to receive any remarks upon his work which my more immediate knowledge of John Wesley may enable me to offer.

About a fortnight since I received his letter: and I am glad to avail myself of the rest it has given to my thoughts, for the purpose of proving to you, if I can, that I duly value your repeated expressions of kindness; and that there is nothing you can tell me about yourself in which I do not feel sincere and deep interest.

Your two letters are lying before me, after being once more read with renewed pleasure. That you should have been so impressed with any thing I said, is, I confess, delightful to me; because, the longer I live the more I am convinced that, in the higher views of spiritual stability and peace which I was led to dwell upon, I have not been "following cunningly devised fables." I am, just

now, going again through the New Testament; and, a day or two since, read the Epistle to the Philippians; in the latter end of which I find all, and much more than all, I could either express or conceive on that sublime topic attested by St. Paul as actually realised in his own mind and heart. The various exhortations and promises are certainly strong enough of themselves to excite ardour and establish confidence. But there is a conclusiveness in that infallible record of positive personal attainment to which I see nothing exactly parallel in the whole epistolary volume besides; and which seems to me to have been written for the very purpose of shewing, by irresistible matter-of-fact evidence, what, even in this world, is the hope of the Christian calling, and “what the exceeding greatness” of “the Divine power toward them who believe.”

Turn with me, I pray you, to this wonderful passage; for, well as you may be acquainted with it, you have scarcely yet, I think, exhausted its contents. It is comprised, you will observe, in three verses; the 11th, 12th, and 13th of the last chapter: and he speaks, at first, as a philosopher, that he may afterward more impressively manifest the feelings of a consummate Christian. Besides, too, he gives a forcible lesson by his *ἐμαυτον*: he teaches us by this word, that we must not expect the graces of the Gospel to be so infused from Heaven as to supersede our own self-discipline; but that we must begin with doing all that we can do for ourselves, if we would expect that “strength” which “is made perfect in our weakness.” And if this *ἐμαυτον* was necessary in St. Paul,

who, in the first instance, was so signally transformed into a new man, how indispensable must it be for a common Christian to apply himself to the same study, and submit to the same tuition!

But, it is remarkable that, even in St. Paul, this philosophical process goes but a certain length. He has "learned, in whatever state he is,"—that is, clearly, in whatever destitute circumstances he may be placed,—*αὐτάρκης εἶναι*. And in this there was nothing extraordinary, considering the obvious aids of that Divine religion to which he had devoted himself, and which is naturally resorted to with fullest cordiality when all other supports have failed. Had he stopped here, therefore (I mean at his superiority to *ὑστέρησις*), he evidently felt he should not have done justice to the grace of God which was in him. Accordingly, after having repeated, in an altered and extended form, his competency to bear adversity, *οἶδα δὲ ταπεινοῦσθαι*, he asserts a far greater skill and power, *οἶδα καὶ περισσεύειν*: and here, indeed, he soars far above the reach of all inferior dispensations, and exemplifies, in its fulness, "the victory which overcometh the world."

But, no sooner does he proceed to this incomparably higher attainment, than he intimates an inexpressibly deeper means. He says, *ἐν παντὶ καὶ ἐν πᾶσι, μεμύημαι*. The force of this expression is very remarkable. He clearly describes himself, not only as prepared for every situation, *ἐν παντὶ*, but for all possible changes, *ἐν πᾶσι*; and this, not from that lower, though still excellent, training which he had expressed before, but by something

infinitely more excellent. He had gained much by "learning" the lessons of Christian wisdom; but he had gained every thing by being "initiated" into the Christian mysteries. By this latter attainment, both his wisdom and his strength were perfected.

With the most entire equanimity, therefore, he contemplates those extreme vicissitudes of human life, by which men in general are elated or dejected, καὶ χορτάζεσθαι καὶ πέναν, καὶ περισσεύειν καὶ ὑστερεῖσθαι : and for each and all he deliberately pronounces himself prepared, through that mysterious initiation.

I need not descant to you on the plenitude and perfection of Christian virtue which St. Paul here declares himself to possess. No man better understood the frailties of human nature, nor could be further removed from all self-confidence : yet, here, he bids defiance to every shape and form of temptation, be it ever so painful or ever so seductive. There is no misconceiving this statement ; it is the solid reality of all that was imagined by Stoic or Platonist : it is an anticipated heaven in the breast, the tranquillity of which cannot be disturbed—the light of which cannot be obscured. Nothing less can be said of this magnificent, yet most suitable and natural self-disclosure. And, after all, it is not as an Apostle that he thus speaks, but simply as a Christian : for it is solely from that Fountain of Life, which is opened alike for all, that he derives what he represents as, in some sort, a moral omnipotence. Πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐνδυναμούντι με Χριστῷ.

In this closing sentence, therefore, the Apostle completes that portraiture of the perfect Christian, which the simple statement of his own growth in grace so happily afforded. The unqualified avowal of such invincible moral power required to be explained, as well as justified, by ascribing it to some adequate source : and he accordingly shews, by a brief but most comprehensive ending of the subject, that that sublimity of virtue which he had attained was nothing more than the Divine life of the Christian carried to its full maturity. To all who aspired to that eminence it was his exhortation, *Ἐνδυναμοῦσθε ἐν Κυρίῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ κρείττει τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ*. And what he says of himself, his own *πάντα ἰσχύω*, assures the like result to faithful and zealous compliance.

But why, in proceeding to his higher attainments, does St. Paul use the emphatical word, which no where else occurs, *μεμύημαι*? I conceive for the purpose of more strongly shewing that entire victory over the world, in its seducing no less than in its persecuting forms, was not the achievement of all who were Christians in sincerity, but of those only who, *ἀφέντες τὸν τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ λόγον*, advance onward *ἐπὶ τὴν τελειότητα*. This higher class of Christians the Apostle frequently recognises : sometimes as *τελείοι*, at other times as *πνευματικοὶ*. Thus, in remarkable accordance with his own *μεμύημαι*, he says (1 Cor. ii. 6, 7), *Σοφίαν λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις*,—*σοφίαν Θεοῦ ἐν μυστηρίῳ*. And, as if to draw the line of distinction between the two classes of Christians still more strongly, he tells the Corinthians, to whom he had delivered

only the μαρτύριον τοῦ Θεοῦ (1 Cor. ii. 1), that he could not speak to them ὡς πνευματικοῖς, ἀλλ' ὡς σαρκικοῖς, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ; for, he adds, οὐπω ἠδύνασθε, ἀλλ' οὔτε ἐτι δύνασθε.

But what is that μυστήριον to which the word μεμύημαι would seem so obviously to refer? Under the Apostle's guidance, I answer that it signifies τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ (1 Cor. ii. 10), whether with respect to the general destiny of the Church, or to the Divine operation on the heart of each faithful Christian. You will find it used in the former sense in the Epistle to the Ephesians, to whom alone he communicated that Σοφία του Θεοῦ ἐν μυστηρίῳ, the developement of which was for the gradual instruction of αἱ ἀρχαὶ καὶ αἱ ἐξουσίαι ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις (Ephes. iii. 10); and, accordingly, Ignatius, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, calls them the Συμμύσται of St. Paul. To these the Μυστήριον is the Divine purpose, εἰς οἰκονομίαν τοῦ πληρώματος τῶν καιρῶν ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ (Ephes. i. 10). And, notwithstanding the rays of light cast upon these words by other parts of the Epistle, their full import must remain, in the strictest sense, a mystery, until elucidated by events. We, therefore, personally and practically, are far more concerned in that other import which St. Paul gives to the same term, in his Epistle to the Colossians; which, as it was written at the same time with that to the Ephesians, seems intended, both by its singular resemblance and its no less singular difference, to direct and, as much as possible, confine the attention of immature Christians to their own perfection individually:

while the simultaneous Epistle to the more mature Christians at Ephesus, opened to their view a magnificent prospect of the Messiah's more extended triumph and universal dominion. It is, however, very remarkable that, in both Ephesians, iii. 9, and Colossians, i. 26, the *Μυστήριον*, however different in extent, is alike declared to be τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων.

But after this agreeing circumstance there is, in the latter instance, this striking distinction: that not the "principalities and powers in heavenly places," but "the saints," are the objects of instruction. It is οἱ ἅγιοι αὐτοῦ, οἷς ἐθέλησεν ὁ Θεὸς γνωρίσαι τίς ὁ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου. But the main difference lies in the *μυστήριον* itself, as will be best seen by transcribing the whole of the immediately following passage. "Ὁς ἐστὶ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης ὃν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν, νουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον, καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἵνα παρεστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (Colos. i. 27, 28).

May we not say that we have here as deep a *μυστήριον* of Divine grace, as we have, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, of Divine wisdom? That to have Christ within is not the description of all Christians who are sincere, is evident from this: that, advanced as the Ephesians were in the ways of God, St. Paul asks that blessing for them as a thing yet to be attained; and even asks, in the first instance, for a preparatory blessing, as if it were, in the order of Divine things, necessarily antecedent to the other. He prays that God may grant to them δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος

αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἕσω ἄνθρωπον; and then adds, κατοικῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως, ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν (Ephes. iii. 16, 17). That we are to give this progressive sense to this passage, and to consider our being strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the inner man as preliminary and preparatory to the indwelling of the Redeemer, through faith in the heart, appears from our Lord's remarkable answer to St. Jude's question, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?" He says, in reply, Ἐὰν τις ἀγαπᾷ με, τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσει, καὶ ὁ Πατήρ μου ἀγαπήσει αὐτὸν, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐλευσόμεθα, καὶ μονὴν παρ' αὐτῷ ποιήσομεν. The virtual agreement of the condition laid down in the first words of this sentence, with St. Paul's first prayer in the passage quoted above, and the strict identity of the blessing which our Lord promises, with the matter of the Apostle's second prayer, are, I think, as obvious as they are remarkable. Nor do I conceive we could find a more precise definition of that Μυστήριον, to the knowledge of which St. Paul invited the Colossians, and into which he declares himself to have been so effectively initiated, than in the assurance here given by our Lord to his faithful followers of an inward heaven, to be enjoyed by them even in this lower world. Than this ineffable attainment, this settled inhabitation of Deity in the recesses of the inner man, there can be no higher point to be reached, and, therefore, no deeper mystery to be known, till our "mortality shall be swallowed up of life."

Thus I have endeavoured to bring together a few of what I think the most direct scriptural

illustrations of the significant word, *μεμύηται*. At the first view, it would seem to intimate a blessing, "which none knoweth but he who receiveth it:" and, I conceive, we are also to conclude from the concurrent import of the texts which have been quoted, that the knowledge of this mystery is not common to all sincere, or even all vital Christians; but that it is set before them as the prize of their high calling, to which they are continually to aspire, and to which, if they "contend lawfully," and persevere in their pursuit, they are certain, sooner or later, to attain. You will judge for yourself, whether I have forced any of the passages I have quoted, or whether I have, as I strictly meant, traced their collective meaning, and followed their concurrent guidance. Modern theologians seem to suppose that the great object of the Gospel is to bring men into a state of favour with God, and of spiritual life. This, rightly understood, is, in the order of the Divine economy, its first object: but it is not duly considered how large a portion of the New Testament is occupied with those further attainments, which Christians, when spiritually animated, are called to pursue. I have wished to turn your attention to one conspicuous representation of this high and holy destiny; but the same subject is urged, under various forms of language and imagery, all pointing to the same issue—the "rest which," even in this world, "remaineth for the people of God." The Epistle to the Hebrews, in particular, appears to me as nothing less than an elaborate discourse on this very subject; as if, indeed, that single verse expressed its prevalent

theme — Οὐδὲν ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος, ἐπεισαγωγὴ δὲ κρείττονος ἐλπίδος, δι' ἧς ἐγγίζομεν τῷ Θεῷ (Heb. vii. 19).

I have thus endeavoured to give you matter for thought, instead of filling my paper with thoughts of my own. I would only observe further, that, with respect both to the substance and the maturity of the Divine life, the New Testament is, in my mind, much more systematical, and much more philosophical, than serious Christians have been in the habit of supposing. I conceive the New Testament, in order to be adequately apprehended and appreciated, ought to be read constantly in the original, and, as much as possible, independently of preconceived theological theories.

I dare say you have Hierocles on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras. If you have not, do not be long without it. The very first sentence of that valuable treatise describes a substance and a maturity of moral attainment, which wonderfully accords, not only with the matter, but, in some measure, with the very terms which we have in the New Testament. The first operation of philosophy, he says, is the *Κάθαρσις*, its consummate effect, the *τελειότης* of human life. We are made pure from the low propensities of animal nature, by *ἀρετὴ*, and being thus fitted for the due apprehension of *ἀληθεία*, we are thereby more and more formed into *ἡ θεῖα ὁμοίωσις*. To shew, fully, how much this statement agrees with the whole tenor of the New Testament, would require a greater number of sheets than I have already filled. I will, therefore, content myself with a single text,

spoken by our Lord (St. John, viii. 31, 32) to the Jews, who had been led to believe on him by the discourse just delivered. The words are arranged so much in the Hebraic order, that I transcribe it as if it were a stanza.

Ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ ἐμῷ,
ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου ἐστέ.
Καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν,
καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς.

Let me now add, to what I have already said of your letters, that every part of them was interesting to me; particularly every thing you told me about yourself. * * * * *

As to myself, I told you quite enough in the beginning of my letter. I only add, on that head, that, through God's goodness, I have no ailments which affect my solid self-enjoyment; but enough to remind me that I am daily approaching the confines of eternity.

Adieu, my dear Mr. Harford.

Believe me

Your ever attached and affectionate Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dec. 27, 1825.

* * * What a strange business human life, in general, is! Had — no family, he would consult his own ease, and limit his business to his corporeal powers. But, because his large

family must be provided for, he must go on, like a galley-slave at the oar. When I witness such things, I feel increased gratitude to Providence, that my weak back is free from every such burden, and that I have only to be attentive to my friends' and my own everlasting salvation.

Ever yours,

A. K.

P.S.—On reading the last paragraph of my note, I see something which I ought to explain. Though I am sure I am incomparably happier, and much providentially favoured, by being as I am, I do think that very few men are fitted for such a state. For, if there be not a disposition to fill the vacant spaces of life with the pursuit and contemplation of unseen things, the mind will be liable to become contracted, by having only self to be careful for; and some base love, subservient to self, will occupy the throne of the heart—the love of money, for instance. I feel much for —. But he is really a religious man; and that makes all the difference in the world, be the circumstances of life ever so perplexing. The faculty of laying one's case before the wise and gracious God, is an alleviation and a resource which none can duly estimate but the possessor.

FROM THE SAME TO MR. —.

* * * True Christianity, I conceive, does not consist in specific views, presented to the mind, or warmly apprehended by the mind, how-

ever subservient, in certain cases, and among certain classes, sensations of this kind may be to its attainment. True Christianity, I humbly think, consists in such an affectionate sense of the Divine realities made known by the Gospel, as produces in us “a right spirit” and “a clean heart:” it consists in a mind supremely and predominantly occupied with spiritual objects, and seeking its chief happiness, and finding its deepest rest, in God; daily and hourly drawing down grace from heaven, by the prayer of the heart, and guarding every degree of grace received by unremitting vigilance over conduct, temper, and thought.

We cannot give to ourselves this religion; for “every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above.” Therefore, says St. James, “If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.” In prayer, then, true religion begins; and in prayer, more than in any thing else, it is exercised until “mortality” is “swallowed up of life.”

In proportion as the mind becomes devout and spiritual, prayer will be felt not merely a duty, but our happiest resource, and truest means of refreshment. By this feeling, especially, may we measure our advance in religion. Until something of this feeling is formed in us, we ought not to think ourselves religious; when we really possess it, it will be the guide of our conduct, as well as the solace of our heart; for it will instinctively teach us to avoid whatever might obstruct, or damp our habitual commerce with heaven.

He who pursues this course will be led as God sees best for him; and he will gradually gain the

surest knowledge of Holy Scripture, through the teaching of the heart.

I am ever most truly yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

P.S.—I concluded my letter without recollecting my intention of remarking more particularly on a passage in the 4th page of the sermon.

The entire sentence runs thus :—" Religion is experience, and not speculation ; and, therefore, the true knowledge of Christ Jesus is the personal and self-appropriating conviction, that he is made unto us, wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

I, too, most entirely believe that religion is experience, and not speculation ; I mean, that it consists in affection and principle, and not in any theoretical views or opinions. But I do not clearly see the import of a "self-appropriating conviction." A "self-appropriating conviction" of personal interest in our blessed Saviour's sacrifice, appears to me to be of a character so inexplicable to any but the person who feels it, and so perfectly undemonstrable on rational principles, that I rejoice to think that the text which is quoted in the 4th page not only admits, but appears to require, a far more intelligible application.

When it is said that our Lord is made unto us "wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption," a fact is declared, which goes far beyond any "self-appropriating conviction," and which can only be verified by unequivocal reality. Then, only, is Christ so made to us, when, through

his communicated grace, [we] become truly wise, truly righteous, and truly holy. But this cannot be accomplished by a mere consolatory manifestation (however impressive) to the mind. The Gospel, of itself, assures us that he is so provisionally; and an internal notification, however real, could tell nothing more. His becoming so to each of us actually, is, indeed, matter of "experience;" for, if we are conscious of becoming wiser and better, and more fearful of every appearance of evil, in consequence of more assiduous devotion, and feeling more cordially the great truths and facts of the Gospel, we have, in the same proportion, what St. John calls the "witness in ourselves," and what St. Paul calls "Christ in us, the hope of glory."

FROM THE SAME TO THE BISHOP OF LIMERICK.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevue, Delgany, Jan. 9, 1826.

* * * * Mr. H. mistakes, if he thinks that I could wish to withhold from him any manuscript that I considered in a state worthy of his perusal. But every thing I have written, except what he is already acquainted with, remains in so unfinished a condition, as to make me doubt whether they deserve preservation. I think you would agree with me, that, as they are, they do not deserve to be communicated, even as records of private thought. This is my sole ground of demur: and, when you and I shall next meet in Dublin, I can easily put it in your power to judge whether the case be not as I have regarded it.

There are many thoughts in my mind, of which no producible record has been made, which I should feel pleasure in offering to Mr. H's. consideration. But none so much, as those which have arisen respecting the doctrines discussed in St. Paul's Epistles, including that to the Hebrews. I believe I had gone a very little way in those inquiries, when I wrote any thing Mr. H. has seen (excepting my tract on the Eucharist). And yet, to myself, the views I speak of appear more important than any others which have passed through my mind. My anxiety, I trust, has been, not to make out support for favourite notions of my own, but to extract the import of the text itself, independently of party interpretation. All this I should rejoice to bring before the mind of Mr. H.; for, until my notions have been examined strictly by some competent judge, I have no right to esteem them more than probable conceptions.

But I must restrain myself for the present, as I have a severe cold.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 17, 1826.

I AM the more disposed to write to you to-day, because I shall be wishing to know how this chilly, misty, stormy weather agrees with you. At this moment, the windows are rattling, and a rainy-looking mist envelopes the landscape. Yet Mr.

and Mrs. L. are out in the chaise : in which, if I were very selfish, and did not particularly love them, I should wish them to be much rather than myself. I find it suits me best, to sit by the fire ; and, I dare say, you join with me in that preference.

Mr. Skinner may have ground for his blame of Elizabeth, and his palliation of Mary. But I must suspend my judgment, till I shall have read what he says against the one, and in favour of the other. The impression on my mind is, that Elizabeth was really afraid of Mary ; and, therefore, wished to rid the world of her, at all events. Had Elizabeth died, Mary was natural heiress to the crown of England ; and the dread of such an event could not but sink deep in the minds of the Protestant statesmen who formed Elizabeth's council. Roman Catholics were still numerous in England : and, how many who had professed the reformed religion might have gone back to the religion of the sovereign, who could tell ? It was a trying question for political Protestants of that day. Mary, moreover, had seemed to express rivalry, by quartering the arms of England with her own. And we, besides, are unacquainted with many circumstances necessary to be known, in order to judge fairly of the case.

With all my tenderness for the Roman Catholic religion, I still think it a poor religion for the adherent, and a terrible one for Protestant neighbours. A devout practice of it will, I trust, fit men for the next world : but it does not qualify for this world ; especially as times have been since the Reformation. I know (and I am glad to think),

that a Roman Catholic and a Church of England man may, in ordinary circumstances, go on very comfortably together. But, much as I regard —, I should be very sorry that my religious liberty were under his control and that of his brother. Where they have no power, all is well. Circumstances have then, as it were, drawn their teeth and pared their claws. But, could they act according to the dictates of their religion, all considerations of a friendly or social kind must sink before the inexorable feeling, which a theological creed, so definite and so exclusive, tends necessarily to inspire. Constitutional good-nature may be such as to confine the proselyting efforts to expostulation and persuasion. But the instances are rare in which those powerful principles are really subdued or safely attempered by kindly feelings. Fénelon seems to have had this sort of invincible gentleness : but I fear it would hardly be found to exist practically in one of a thousand.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO J. S. HARFORD, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. HARFORD,

Bellevue, Delgany,
Oct. 23, 1826.

MRS. H. mentions, in a late letter to —, that you kindly purpose sending me the Bishop of Bristol's work on Tertullian. I hasten, therefore, to say, that I have been, for several months, in possession of the bishop's volume, and have read every word of it. I considered it a curious kind of

examination, and I was very soon engaged by the ability with which it is executed. I am not, in every instance, disposed to take precisely the same view; while I consider many of the observations weighty and important, and none more than what is said of tradition, from the 295th to the 300th page. While, therefore, I most sincerely thank you for your intended present, I wish to put it in your power to turn it to some use, more suitable to its value.

I am glad to see that the Bishop of London* has exactly the same view of tradition with the Bishop of Bristol. The latter refers to a discourse on the subject with which I am well acquainted; and which, indeed, contains the conjoint thoughts of the Bishop of Limerick and myself. Our chief theme is taken from Vincentius Lerinensis, a writer of the fifth century; and we both consider the principle which he lays down, as affording matter for the most successful and conclusive warfare against the extravagant doctrine of tradition taught by the Church of Rome. The most curious circumstance is, that the Roman Catholics affect to build on Vincentius, while, indubitably, they are opposed to him point blank; and, to insist upon his doctrine, is to trample down theirs.

When Mr. Hart Davis was in this house (where, I need not assure you, he was a most acceptable guest), I was so unwell as to make me fearful of conversation. I am sorry to say I have not yet recovered my ordinary health. My stomach has

* Dr. Howley, now Archbishop of Canterbury.

got out of order; and, though I hope every now and then that I am becoming better, I relapse. The greatest inconvenience is, that it restrains me from exercising close thought. And, in consequence, a little matter which I am writing, and about which I am solicitous, lingers; and I must thereby be prevented from attending, as I could wish, to your question about ἑμαυτον and μεμύημαι. If I live, I hope, however, not to forget it.

I believe the ancient writer most relied upon by the Church of Rome, as maintaining its novel view of the Eucharist, is Cyril of Jerusalem; and, were he to be estimated by one or two expressions taken apart, there would be plausibility in their claim. But, on such a subject, the whole of what an author says must be considered together. For, however, in one or two passages, he may seem to favour Transubstantiation, it amounts to nothing conclusive if he elsewhere says what is incompatible with Transubstantiation; because the accordance with it can be no other than apparent and oratorical, when plain prose positions, elsewhere, literally and necessarily exclude the notion.

You and Mrs. Harford ever have the kindest and most cordial wishes of

Your and her most faithful and affectionate Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO MISS FERGUSSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 17, 1827.

* * * The best of it is, however, that, in such cases, the anticipations of anxious thought are scarcely ever verified. Hopes are often, I might say generally, disappointed in this delusive world; but, I believe, fears are very frequently disappointed also; and thus are we mercifully taught, through our own experience, not to take anxious thought for to-morrow.

May 18, 1827.

A packet has come to us from —, with a kind note from her, and some strictures, by a friend of hers, through her brother, on my Eucharistic tract. The objections are such as I should expect from a person professedly averse to every thing not opposite to the Roman Catholic religion. Her note is like herself. I must write to her. She liked my tract, because it maintained only what she had been early taught. This is, to me, a pleasant reason; because I do think my acquaintance with Mrs. — was among the means of imbuing my mind with Church of England principles; at least, of strengthening my almost native bias to that best and loveliest form of visible Christianity.

July 10, 1827.

* * * I think the reformatations are less conspicuous than they were. I thought this the most likely calculation; for the zeal of the reformers seemed to me “not according to knowledge.”

I myself should take pleasure in a sound and temperate reformation. But an unsound and intemperate one, I must regard as worse than none.

I know the worst of Roman Catholics; but I do not know the worst of self-directed adventurers in religion. I cannot wish, therefore, that there should be any very numerous forsaking of the old station, until there be some fair hope of their settlement in a better.

I think that great light still remains to be thrown upon religion. The Holy Scripture contains all that ever shall be revealed; but how imperfectly is it yet understood, whether by Roman Catholic or Protestant! I myself think its whole import will, at length, appear to be, the making men good, by influence from on high, in order to their being happy through the enjoyment of the supreme good, substantially here, and consummately hereafter.

Aug. 3, 1827.

* * * You see from that newspaper which you sent me, how much the Roman Catholics were provoked at the procession. And, on every account, it was wrong to bring children out of their retirements, into the public streets, to be the instruments of provocation. "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth," says St. Paul, "live peaceably with all men." It would be hard to say, whether the morality of this precept be greater, or its policy. It is a dictate of the benignant wisdom which arranged the green earth and blue sky; and which, in every part of the visible creation, has done so much to please us, that we

are ungrateful and insensible, if we do not, hence, learn (as St. Paul instructs us) to "please all men, for their good, to edification."

Sept. 18, 1827.

I have no relish for the plan of the present day, to set the unlearned on the discussion of controverted points. The Holy Scripture may be, to such persons, under proper guidance, a rich and inexhaustible storehouse of food and medicine, and refreshing cordials; but they have no business with it as a magazine or arsenal, except, simply, in their warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Sept. 25, 1827.

* * * If I did not believe in the providence of God, and the consequent guidance of all things, progressively, to a good and happy issue, I should think the living world as jarring and jumbled a chaos, as that of the earth when it was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. But, believing, as I do, in those two great truths, I think I see, even amid the darkness, such gleams of light, "such dawnings of beams, and promises of day," as persuade, and even satisfy me, that vices and follies, however gross, however predominant, are never suffered to have their own uncontrolled way; but are always over-ruled, some way or other, so as to subserve the purposes, at least ultimately, of supreme wisdom and goodness.

Oct. 23, 1827.

* * * That penny-post letter which you sent me, is from ——. He writes to protest,

conscientiously, against the doctrine of my tract on the Eucharist. He speaks very strongly; but very charitably and courteously. He does not say any thing positively against my own everlasting safety; but he is sure I am doing a great deal of hurt by my known disbelief of the common doctrine of the atonement. I can only hope that I am not doing hurt by a conscientious dissent from what I take to be the doctrine of human theology, and not of Holy Scripture. I believe every thing which the inspired word asserts; and I believe nothing more, except so far as right reason teaches me, in due subordination to the oracles of God. The great difference between us is, that they fix their minds upon what our Saviour did once for all; as if that were sufficient to save, everlastingly, all who trust in it. I, on the other hand (ascribing all importance to what was done by our Saviour, once for all, as a preliminary work, and a general blessing), think that my one concern is, that the Divine work which could, in the first instance, on any grounds of reason, only be provided for, should effectually be accomplished in my heart and life: that is, that, through the ever-powerful grace of God incarnate, I should be, inwardly and outwardly, redeemed from all iniquity, and purified as one of God's peculiar people, so as to be zealous of good works.

Dec. 21, 1827.

* * * I reckoned too much on the amendment of my throat. It does not grow worse; but the disease stubbornly adheres to me. What I most feel is, the necessity of keeping silence. I

cannot speak two or three sentences without risk of increasing uneasiness. It has, to me, altogether, great appearance of providential discipline. Reading, writing, and conversing, have been my chief occupations. For twelve months, now, I have been deprived of the two former; and, at length, it pleases Providence to restrain me in the latter. Certainly I can write a little better than I did; and, if that power is continued to me, it will be a great alleviation. This week I have written two letters: one, of three quarto pages and a half; the other, yesterday, of two pages and a half, of the same size. If I am suffered to retain this power, I shall have great cause to be thankful.

* * * * *

God bless you! particularly at this good time.

Ever yours,

A. K.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO THE REVEREND CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

May 1st, 1827.

I THANK you, with all my heart, for your most kind letter received this morning. I had heard on Sunday of my poor dear friend's attack, and was, consequently, in exceeding great anxiety. * * * I feel deep comfort that the attack was so mercifully limited, that it affected only the body, and not the mind. In this circumstance, I feel an invaluable alleviation, and a cheering hope that the attack may be soon surmounted, with the consequent advantage of knowing with certainty

the constitutional liability. I am grateful for every particular you have mentioned; and your letting me know two or three times a week how he goes on, however briefly, will gratify me inexpressibly, and scarcely less his friends of this house. They are cordially attached to the bishop, and well know how to appreciate his worth.

I hope and trust we may do some good by praying to God for our friends; and I can truly say, that I have never ceased to ask for my invaluable friend the best of all blessings (which, in truth, includes every thing else truly valuable), with the same sincerity as for myself.

* * * When I heard the distressing account, I felt for you as truly as for myself; and, indeed, I felt also for the judge, whose heart towards his brother I have long had room to know — no two brothers, in fact, could be more united. I humbly hope that Providence will be pleased to give comfort to us all.

May 8th, 1827.

* * * I trust, from these last accounts, that your prospects are not less hopeful. But I shall be most anxious to receive a line or two (I care not how short) from you, to tell me exactly, from time to time, how you yourself are impressed.

The fact is, that there are now only three persons in the world besides the bishop for whom I could feel similar anxiety; and my concern for him, on other accounts, is as deep as it could be for any living man. This you well know; and I confide in your cordial wish to preserve me from painful anxiety.

* * * * *

If you see it right to mention this letter to the bishop, you may indeed tell him that I have him continually in my deepest thoughts; and I hope I may add, in something of the same sense as St. Paul says to the Philippians, that I have him "in my heart." For two other friends in this house I may truly use the same strict language. When, on Sunday night, I said to Mrs. L. after prayers, "I think when you used that prayer, you had our friend in your thoughts." Her answer was, "He is never out of my thoughts."

May 24th, 1827.

As I am obliged still to restrain myself in writing (and am not yet able to read a sentence), I must beg of you to express to James my sincere acknowledgment of his kind letter, which I received yesterday. I was comforted by his report of the bishop's tranquil rest. But, as I have a natural tendency to see the worst in every thing, I feel some sort of apprehension that the progress of amendment is, latterly, less marked than it was when you mentioned his power to move his hand and foot. I hope this is a shade cast by my own imagination on the statements so kindly and circumstantially made to me. If so, I shall not only rejoice, but receive a fresh lesson against trusting the suggestions of my sickly fancy.

* * * * *

The fact is, that in the great work of re-integrating the inner man we can do little for ourselves. We may be faithful to what we have received, and we may entreat for more of Divine grace and operation. But, on this latter depends

our actual progress; and in what manner the benefit is to be conferred, and real advancement effected, no human mind can previously conjecture. It is our wisdom, therefore, not less than our duty, to "be careful for nothing; but in every thing to make our requests known unto God;" and as much as possible to leave ourselves in his hands. Johnson's lines on this subject, in the conclusion of his "Vanity of Human Wishes," are very fine: as, indeed, the whole poem is a most noble modification of a magnificent original.

FROM THE SAME TO THE BISHOP OF LIMERICK.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Bellevue, Delgany, June 6, 1827.

THOUGH I am unable to do much more than write a line or two, I can no longer refrain from telling yourself how deeply I rejoice in the mercy and goodness of God to you, and to all your friends. I must not attempt to express either the feelings or the reflections with which your case altogether has impressed and occupied my mind. I can only say, that the distress which I felt at the first moment (when I as yet knew nothing to abate my heartfelt alarm), has been wonderfully compensated by every successive communication which has been so kindly and constantly made to me. I am deeply indebted to the judge, Mr. John and Mr. Richard Jebb, and particularly to Charles Forster, whose attention to my anxiety, and assiduous care to afford me every possible

satisfaction, will ever make us grateful, as I was already sincerely attached to him.

I am inexpressibly happy to make to them, through you, my most cordial acknowledgments; and you will believe how gladly I would now go on to converse a little with you, if I were not afraid of suffering for it afterward. The inability of my eye implies, undoubtedly, a great privation; the more painful, because yet I feel no symptom of amendment. But it is so simply a dispensation of Providence, that I submit to it, I trust, with entire acquiescence. Nothing through life has ever yet happened amiss to me; and therefore experience teaches me to leave myself, without reserve, in his gracious hands to whom I owe all my comforts here, and all my hope of happiness hereafter. Adieu!

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

Bellevûe, Delgany, Aug. 3, 1827.

* * * * * The fact is, that for some length of time I have thought a great deal more than I have written. In proportion as I have seemed to myself to see into the Divine philosophy of the New Testament, I have found it difficult to do adequate justice to the views which have gradually appeared to open on my mind. My powers of explaining and elucidating have been felt to sink

under the greatness of the subject; and, in forming an actual statement, I have scarcely known how to begin, and still less in what manner to proceed, or where to end.

The two Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews have specially occupied my thoughts; and, though I have often made the attempt, I never could accomplish any set of remarks upon either, which were at all likely to exhibit my meaning, or were fit to be submitted to the eye even of the most partial friend. If certain friends had been near me, to aid me by their counsels, I might have been able to do something: but I have always felt myself unable, in my solitary endeavours, to make satisfactory to others what appeared evident to myself. I could not proceed a step without combating the popular theologists of three hundred years; and the labour of hopefully propounding my antagonistic scheme (however partially countenanced by great names) has, in every attempt, as yet, appeared to baffle my utmost ability both of mind and body.

I have said so much merely to enable you to explain to Mr. H., when you have an opportunity, why I should not have other later matters of the same kind with those earlier ones which he has seen, to submit to his perusal. It may justly appear strange to him that the former habit should not have continued: but the difference really is, that my own theories were easily committed to paper; but, to give a competent elucidation of those two profound treatises, which, more than any others, contain the organised elements of

evangelic doctrine, is a work of incomparably greater difficulty : and, accordingly, while my views seem to myself matter of demonstration, all my attempts to give them form and consistency have proved abortive. * * * *

Adieu, my dear Charles.

Believe me ever

Most faithfully and gratefully yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO MISS FERGUSON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 11, 1828.

* * * * Were I able to read and write, and my own master, how glad should I be to be with you a little while : but, how to leave this place I know not, and what I should do in town I know not ; especially as Michael is now so little able to read to me. I cannot tell you how much I feel this. God give me grace and wisdom to make a good use of every dispensation, to the deepening of inward religion in my mind and heart, and to the preparing me more perfectly for the call, of which my contemporary friend's death gives me a new premonition !

Jan. 18, 1828.

* * * * I wish, when you see your nephew, you would desire him not to say any thing of Corregan's applications to me, as there is a danger that the nature of them might be mistaken. His calls upon me may be too frequent, but they are not to be considered as begging. Corregan

has really a right to regard himself as my pensioner; he was to me an attentive and faithful chairman, and he did not quit industry till it quitted him. Therefore, I pray you, take care that he be not represented as begging from me; for, though he may expect too much from me, begging is out of the case: and I would not, for many times what he is likely to get from me, that he should be charged, through me, with violating the rules of the house. His applications to me, moderate or immoderate, are no such violation; and when Pat speaks to him, I wish him to do it most civilly: for poor Corregan is a man of feeling, and I would not hurt his feeling for any consideration. You understand me fully, I am sure; and I need say no more on the subject.

I am sorry to tell you that my throat is not improving. Uneasiness returned on Wednesday, probably through the severity of the easterly wind, which blew vehemently that day on the front of this house. But, still, it is only relaxation of which I have to complain; and I need not complain at all, when I am able to write, as I am now doing. The main matter is, that I must be frugal in talk; and, as I said before, that is no bad discipline for one apt to be profuse in talk.

That is an excellent letter of —'s. I am not sure I could subscribe to every word of it. I think he says something of our differences with the Roman Catholics not being "important:" I could not allow that; I think they are very important, and that our Reformation was an invaluable benefit and blessing. But I, at the same time, am assured the

errors maintained by the Roman Catholic Church, though, in many instances, gross and of unhappy tendency, are in [no] instance vital.

Feb. 15, 1828.

* * * * I cannot boast of my eye ; but, on the whole, it advances rather than loses ground, and within this week I have, now and then, just looked at a book without injury. If this amendment proceeds, I may once more, old as I am, have some tolerable use of it.

The truth is, old age does not yet very sensibly oppress me. I sometimes wonder at myself, that my body and mind are yet so free from actual decay. I owe every thing to God's blessing. But I, no doubt, am particularly served, both in mind and body, by the freedom from care with which I have been favoured, and the strict temperance which I have been enabled to exercise. You will agree with me that these matters are, under Providence, great preservatives from premature sinking, whether of the mind or of the animal frame.

Feb. 26, 1828.

* * * * I did not tell you I could read ; I meant to say only that I could write with ease and apparent safety. But, if it pleases Providence that I shall advance, as I have been advancing for a month or six weeks past, I trust to be able to read once more. May I have grace to use all things aright, whether prosperous or adverse ! The power to read will be a great blessing ; especially as Michael, I think, becomes less and less competent.

Poor ——! I had not an idea he was seven years younger than I am. Sudden death is no unpleasant thought, with the hope of being prepared for it; but, then, whatever it appears, it is not that sudden death which is deprecated in the Liturgy.

March 14, 1828.

* * * My walk was prevented. Scarcely had I mentioned it on the other side, when I was called down to give my counsel about a letter which Mrs. L. was going to write, and in which she wished my assistance. This was an indispensable call. And, though it stopped my walk, it did not baulk my pleasure; for, to give any kind of assistance to a beloved friend, is to me a far more gratifying thing, than to do any little matter for myself.

How my paper respecting John Wesley will be received by Mr. Southey, I cannot conjecture. Certainly, I never wrote any thing with more thought, or greater care. My object was to do good to Mr. Southey, as well as to do justice to my old friend. That you may judge of my motives for offering fresh thoughts on religious subjects to Mr. S., I will copy his remarks on my Eucharistic tract, from the last *Quarterly Review*.

“ Some of our readers may thank us for directing them to an inquiry on grounds of Scripture and reason, into the use and import of the Eucharistic symbols; a little treatise printed at Dublin in 1824. It is composed with the unaffected humility of sincere devotion; and it enters with that spirit into the heights and depths of Divine philosophy. Mr.

Hallam" (whose highly whiggish work is under review), "if he condescends to look at it, may not like it the worse for being the work of a layman."

March 26, 1828.

* * * I believe the severity of the late weather has been the immediate cause of my eyes being so affected ; but I now think it probable they will get back to a state that will admit of my writing. When I shall be able to use them in reading, I know not. I am glad, however, I had it in my power to finish my paper before I was disabled ; and I have the pleasure to tell you, that it has completely satisfied Mr. Southey, who says that I must allow him to insert the whole of it in a new edition of John Wesley's Life ; not only to shew on what ground he has changed his opinion, but because he so much approves of the "system of Divine philosophy" which is opened in the latter part of it ; which, he thanks God, he himself has long very much entertained, and which alone could keep his mind easy in the present posture of public dispositions, both abroad and at home.

April 1, 1828.

I merely write a line, to tell you that my nerves are becoming so ill, and my feelings are so painful, that I have little doubt, to-day, of being obliged to go to you to-morrow. I know that nothing ails me but nervousness ; but it is real nervous derangement of stomach and head, and not fancy. For I would fain surmount my bodily depression, if I were able ; my mind being, indeed,

afflicted, but not depressed by any sinking of its own.

April 2, 1828.

I slept, last night, not without frequent waking, but without lying awake. The want of rest, therefore, is no longer an object of alarm; and, consequently, I do not go to you. But how soon I may be obliged to do so, I positively cannot say; for my stomach and nerves are in such a state as to frighten me. I am sensible that these are very deceptive feelings. Still, they come on so suddenly, that I cannot tell what they may rise to. Therefore, I may come to Dublin unexpectedly.

I humbly trust God will do the best for me; but my head is affected by my stomach in such a way, that I am quite afraid to hear reading. If even I can listen, it seems to hurt me afterwards.

The thought sometimes comes that I shall not emerge, but that I am approaching my close. My reason tells me that the symptoms of such an event do not appear. That, however, proves little; as Providence has so many ways of shortening life, besides gradual decay. I suppose, however, that I am not going to die.

I feel enough to make me wish to see Dr. Cheyne, if I thought he could do me any good. But I know, from former experience, he could do me none; and, in fact, such cases are not within the reach of medicine.

I have fears and weaknesses in abundance. Still, I humbly hope, God will preserve to me the supports of his holy religion; and that he will deign to be, himself, my refuge in the time of

trial. If my present discomforts be the means of deepening religion in me, I shall have no cause to regret them. I am able, in the midst of my weakness, to exercise my thoughts on that best of subjects; and, if God continues to me this power, and blesses me in using it, I shall have no reason to complain, but much to be thankful. We never value the grace of God so much, as when we are obliged to have recourse to it for our support against what would be, otherwise, overwhelming.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
JAMES J. HORNBY.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bellevue, Delgany, II
Jan. 1st and 2d, 1828.

THOUGH I am still somewhat ailing, I am solicitous to give attention, however briefly, to the important practical question which you have been pleased to bring before me.

Let me, then, assure you, that every consideration which has arisen in your mind respecting the claims of the Roman Catholic Church to the charitable forbearance of Reformed Episcopalians, has been long present to my thoughts, and impressive on my feelings. I, like you, my dear Sir, have thought much, and, as deeply as I could, upon the subject. And the practical conclusion to which I soon came was, that Providence having thought right to suffer so large a portion of the Western Church to remain upon its old ground, we, as owing so much to the providential distinctiveness

with which our Reformation was marked, were peculiarly bound to recognise and venerate the order of overruling Wisdom, which decreed the change to be confined to certain countries (and in those countries to be mysteriously diversified), when, had such been the Divine will, it might so easily have been rendered universal throughout Europe.

In fact, there is not a sentiment which you have expressed that I also do not approve and admire. It is true I have taken additional views, besides those which you have stated, of this great mystery of Providence; but I have little doubt that I should find most, if not all of them, to have occurred virtually, if not expressly, to your own mind.

At present I will only mention two instances in which I conceive the Anglican Church to be infinitely indebted to the Roman Catholic Church. I mean for the rich inheritance which we possess in our Prayer Book; and which we not only owe to the guardianship of the Roman Catholic Church, but actually to that usage which is ranked with its most flagrant errors—the Latin service; since, but for this, the treasures of ancient devotion must soon have vanished in the new versions of every half century, required by the progressive changes in the languages of Europe: I mean, also, for the stability which our episcopacy may have enjoyed from being kept in countenance by that of the Roman Catholic Church. We needed, it should seem, some strong support against the attractive power of unepiscopal Protestantism; nor, I think, can we admit a doubt

that, if all the south of Europe had imitated the north of Germany, our remnant of ancient church symmetry would infallibly have been absorbed in the mighty vortex.

From the considerations, then, which are common to us both, and from additional considerations, as I said, which probably have arisen in your mind not less than in mine, I have regarded it always as my best line of conduct to leave the Roman Catholic Church collectively and individually in the hands of Him who ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; nor do I perceive any thing in the present movements to induce a change in this resolution. The aggressive spirit which has now begun to operate, may be in the order of Providence; not, possibly, for effecting much of that which is contemplated, but for accomplishing, some way or other, ultimately, the benignant purposes of the unerring Disposer. But, what the primary results are to be, I cannot calculate. At present the angry passions seem to be in exercise, both on the one side and on the other. And in what kind of issue this systematised warfare is to terminate, it is not, I conceive, in human wisdom to determine. In every view of the matter, therefore, I myself think it right to keep aloof; for, were the general question even more doubtful to me, there are circumstantial points on which I should be obliged to dissent from the present Reformers.

* * * * *

Being thus obliged to enter on a second sheet, I will venture to submit to you one, at least, of the "additional thoughts" which I have conceived

respecting the Roman Catholic Church. It appears to me that, in our estimate of that Church, we must not confound the body of that Church (that is, the assemblage of bishops, presbyters, and baptized persons, which it contains) with the papal power which holds that mass in captivity. That power, I am convinced, is the Apocalyptic Babylon; but the subjugated body, I cannot doubt, is "the Holy City," which the Gentiles were to tread down for "forty and two months." I, accordingly, deem it as unfair to extend our censures of the papal usurpation to the whole Roman Catholic Church, as it would have been, of old, to confound the captivated Jews with the literal Babylon, while it kept them in bondage.

I am inclined to think, that the mass of errors of which we complain in the Roman Catholic Church, may, not unreasonably, admit of a correspondent distinction; one class of errors growing out of the increasing darkness and multiplied misconceptions of Christians, however sincere, from the fourth to the eighth century; the other class, subsequently fabricated by the agents of Popery, among whom the two orders of begging friars, and their various subdivisions, hold the chief place.

The former class of errors was, perhaps, not merely permitted, but, in some sort, ordered by overruling wisdom; because, without such an accommodation to barbarous habits and sensitive minds, it might not have been possible to establish, much less to perpetuate, a national profession of

Christianity. What was done, by express appointment, in the case of the Jewish religion, may have been providentially brought about, in the latter instance, for exactly a similar reason. As the patriarchal religion, when it was to extend through an entire people, and to be transmitted from generation to generation, was, by Divine direction, enveloped in carnal ordinances, and beggarly elements, that it might engage, through the senses, those in whom the mind was yet comparatively dormant; so, in the wisdom of God, when Christianity was to be similarly diffused and transmitted through nations of equally gross habits and narrow capacities, an analogous accommodation grew up by degrees, perhaps in exact proportion to the exigence; and thus our holy religion became little less enveloped in "beggarly elements" than that of the Jews; though, I should think, with a wonderfully overruled adjustment to the higher dispensation, which, in like circumstances, was to be equally popularised and interminably perpetuated.

How far pernicious practices mingled with the merely weak observances to which I refer, it is difficult to say; inasmuch as "the mystery of iniquity" had been working from the beginning. But, on the whole, an invaluable result seems to have been thus secured. The Christian faith was preserved "whole and undefiled," under that incrustation of ceremonies in which it might have been thought entombed; but which, in most instances, had a significancy, that made them edifying to well-disposed minds; and in others, even of a more exceptionable kind (such as devotions to

the Virgin), a relation to the most vital matters of faith that might make them (gross as they were) a kind of defensive outwork to some, at least, of the essentials of the Christian religion.

Of the Papal enormities, and the anti-Christian superstitions of later times, we must, in reason, make a very different estimate. The severest censures which our Divines have pronounced, do not here, I am sure, go beyond the truth. But, it should always be remembered, that those more palpable scandals have scarcely been animadverted on in deeper-toned complaints, by any Protestant, than by some Roman Catholic writers. You, probably, are well acquainted with Fleury's "Discourses on Ecclesiastical History." Jortin has translated some of them. They eminently exemplify the remark I have just made.

It is, also, in candour to be observed, that the false devotions of Friars and Jesuits have never been enjoined by the Roman Catholic Church, but only permitted. It may be truly said, that this permission is bad enough; it would, in fact, be inexcusably bad, were it not that that Church is itself a slave, and therefore cannot do otherwise.

I make these remarks so briefly, that I fear they will not convey my full meaning. They contemplate the Roman Catholic Church in its ordinary aspect. But I doubt whether, latterly, "the mystery of iniquity" may not have been, and, still more, is, working with increased energy. I, therefore, am not sure but that the present active antagonists may be furnished, by those who come forward to resist them, with much, apparently,

to justify their hostile zeal. Of this, Dr. Doyle is already a lamentable instance. But, let this be as it may, I am sure I shall still think it safest merely to look on, and leave events to Providence.

I meant to have mentioned in the preceding page (but strangely forgot it until I had entered on the second head of errors) the strong evidences which we have, that the earlier errors did not impede the attainment of sincere (perhaps I might say sublime) piety. I need not name examples, with which you may be as well acquainted as I am. But I will just add that, when I compare the devotional writings of Rede, of Hugo de Sancto Victor, or of Kempis, with the general current of Protestant writers (I speak not of true Church-of-England Divines), I am obliged to think that, however desirable it is that those ancient errors should have been corrected, the practical difference is not necessarily so great as zealous reformers have been disposed to conclude.

I have left myself only room to say, that to be able to prove my value for all your communications, will ever inexpressibly gratify

My dear Sir, your most attached Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Bellevûe, Delgany, Feb. 23, 1828.

I TRUST I need not assure you that my delay in thanking you for your kind and interesting letter of the 19th ult., has not arisen from lessened

desire for such communications. Though my anxiety is abated, my wish to be acquainted with my friend's state (I could say, if that were not unreasonable, from week to week) is as much alive as ever. Besides, some expressions in your last raised the hope of greater advance from the time of your writing. If, therefore, you shall not have written before this letter reaches you, I rest confident you will not willingly defer giving me the comfort, I trust, of a further report of our friend's convalescence.

I am much gratified by what you say of Mr. Wilberforce. It is his great advantage to have been withdrawn from the bustle of political life (intentionally moral as his objects were), instead of being, like poor Lord Liverpool or Mr. Canning, — the former virtually, the latter literally, — struck down in the midst of it. When John Valdesso (a courtier of Charles V., but a great man) solicited his dismissal, and was asked by his master why he wished it, his answer was to this effect: "*Inter negotia et terminum vitæ, oportet esse aliquid spatii.*" It has been said that this reply took hold of Charles's mind, and contributed to his forming the resolution of resigning his high station. Be that as it may, it was a true saying. And, if such a space be not afforded, the question

"*Lenior ac melior fis, accedente senectâ?*" will not be likely to receive a satisfactory answer. I am grateful for Mr. Wilberforce's kind recollection of me.

May 7th, 1828.

I THANK my kind friend the bishop and yourself, for the friendly feelings expressed in your letter. I am unable to reply to them in the way I could wish. I am suffering under the most oppressive indisposition that I have felt for years. A combination of biliousness (as it is called) and nervousness: the former, I should think, occasioning the latter; and both pressing upon me in a very uncomfortable way. My symptoms have somewhat changed from what they were at first; perhaps, I might say, somewhat abated. But nervous affections scarcely admit of comparison with each other; as the present, if not actually as morbid as a former one, is capable, at any moment, of becoming as seemingly bad by a mere turn of thought. Such, then, being my present case, I can only endeavour to commit myself to the mercy and goodness of God, from whose unerring hand my present chastisement most certainly has come. Being in such a state, however much I like the work the bishop is engaged in, I cannot possibly do any thing of the kind he wishes. I do not know when I was less capable of such an attempt; and I certainly do not feel any mark, which I dare rely upon, of commencing convalescence.

I rejoice in your report of the bishop. Give my love to him; receive it for yourself, and believe me

Ever your affectionate and grateful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAREST ———,

April 8, 1828.

I CANNOT report of myself so favourably as I was in hope I might do yesterday. My complaint returned on me after I wrote, and kept me uncomfortable during the evening. I am at this moment easier; but know not what I may be the next hour. How long, therefore, Providence may see fit to continue the present discipline, I cannot conjecture. In itself, it is only what I have had to bear again and again; and, certainly (if things do not grow worse), sometimes with more oppressiveness; and, I might say, less alleviation than at this time. For, now, I more or less get comfortable rest; and in nervous cases, this assuages all other discomforts. I suppose, did the weather admit of my taking exercise in the air, it might serve me. But this and every thing else I must leave with Providence. If the good God blesses me with internal support, and enables me to take refuge in Himself from the stormy wind and tempest, I commit all the rest to his unerring wisdom.

I shall rejoice to know that you all are going on at least as well as usual. As to myself, I deeply feel that, till I grow better, I am fit only for the place in which I am, however deeply I regret that I am thus withdrawn from one of the dearest duties of social life that could be exercised by a friend in this lower world.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

April 10, 1828.

* * * * Whatever be the amount of my trial, if God be pleased to make it the means of good to me, I shall have cause to be inexpressibly thankful. Hitherto I have been trained, I think, by successive instances of discipline; without which, I might have never known true happiness. And I have not doubted, that some fresh exercises of the same kind of mercy might be expedient, as tending to still deeper radication,—of which I could not but feel the want; while I hoped I desired it with sincerity. Perhaps what I am now suffering (it does not, however, deserve that name; for, hitherto, God has dealt gently and graciously with me,) may serve to promote that infinitely valuable object; for I see enough, and have felt enough, to teach me what an unutterable blessing it must be, to attain that which is described in Ephes. iii. 16, 17.

The human heart is naturally sluggish; and, even in outward things, it is by necessity that man is forced to activity. This is much more the case in what concerns the immortal Spirit. “The corruptible body presseth down the incorruptible soul;” and there is too great a disposition to yield to the pressure, until some felt necessity compels to resistance. But this is the least part of the hinderance. The tendency we have to be engaged, by the present life, to cleave too dependently to persons and things which it is right to value and love,—but subordinately, and soberly:

this disposition, I say, is a still worse thing, and yet may be quite beyond our own correction. What, therefore, we cannot do for ourselves, God himself may be pleased to do for us. And our wisdom, as well as duty, is to commit ourselves to his management, and duly to appreciate the anodynes which he kindly mingles with the painful parts of the process. I trust I have had repeated reason for gratitude of the deepest kind, on this very account, during the present indisposition: and I certainly receive new lessons from it, of the importance of living in the spirit of prayer in ordinary circumstances. When, through Divine grace, we are thus kept in daily and hourly intercourse of the heart with God, this blessed habit grows, as it were of itself, more intense and deep in the time of trial; and the support which, I trust, is thus brought through Divine mercy from above, is a rock which cannot be shaken.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR —

April 12, 1828.

I SHOULD have been very glad to have confirmed my mention of Monday as the day of my return; but, alas! I am really little more fit for returning to Bellevûe than I was for staying there when I left it. My hopes of speedy amendment are not realised; and, to the present hour, I am unable to calculate what my symptoms may be before that or the next hour shall

have gone by. In fact, for the present, I am a decided invalid, fit for nothing but practising submission, trust in God, humble application for more effectual grace, together with the government, as far as possible, of my mental movements, which are painfully liable to disturbance from the state of my nervous system. Weather in which I could walk out would, I believe, serve me ; but, just now, that is out of the question.

My left eye is weak to-day, and annoying me in writing ; or I, rather, am annoying it. Still, I must go on to say, that I felt some reluctance in sending off my note of Thursday ; but I could not have written another. On reflection, I could not but blame myself for speaking as I did of the providential design of my indisposition. That design is, assuredly, kind and merciful ; I would fain hope it is paternal. But, to allow the mind to conceive particular purposes (as if the providential visitation was to accomplish a supposed definite object), is taking, perhaps, much too great a liberty with Him whose ways are so much above our ways, and whose thoughts are above our thoughts. I humbly trust my present affliction is to do me good. I would fain hope I shall find the continued supports and alleviations for which I have hitherto cause to be thankful ; that it will serve to shew me the blessed resource of religion in the day of trial, and be the occasion of deepening devotion ; and, through God's goodness, of strengthening whatever principle of operative faith God has been pleased to vouchsafe to me. But whether, if it were off to-morrow, I should not find myself the same weak

and frail creature as before, with the same vicissitudes of feeling, and the same need to guard all my sensibilities, and look still for "mercy," as well as "grace to help me in time of need," is to me, on reflection, so much a matter of rational doubt, that I could not but fear I had spoken with less caution than sobriety would dictate respecting my present providential discipline. What is said in Heb. xii. 5, &c. is sure: it is enough also; and my part is simply to trust in this consolatory assurance.

Ever yours,

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

April 23, 1828.

I THANK you for your kind note; but I cannot yet return a thoroughly pleasant answer. My indisposition lingers; I am better in some respects, and not in others. Accordingly, I have as real need as ever of leaving myself in the hands of the wise and merciful God. In truth, I have a somewhat painful time; I can only trust that I am in gracious hands; that I shall have strength for each successive hour of trial; and that all will be overruled for my best and highest good. God knows what is best for me; and I hope I am most anxious that He should make me radically and cordially what I ought to be, by deepening his own blessed religion in my heart, and making that the governing principle of every action, word, thought, and feeling. As to alleviations, I must mention that I

have been able to read with more ease for two or three days past, than for months. I know not how long this may continue, but it is a great mercy to me in my present situation. I do not feel secure in it; still, while it lasts, I have reason to be thankful for it, and to acknowledge it as an opportune comfort.

April 30, 1828.

* * * * You ask about my nights. I am bound to say that in that, as I trust in every respect, God has been very merciful to me. I certainly have not healthful rest, but I have been preserved from very painful waking; and, last night, I had much more sleep than I had expected, inasmuch as I had slept the night before; and, for some former time, I had not had two nights of moderate sleep together. Every second night I had lain awake for hours, and only slept towards morning. Last night (I trust I am thankful!) it was otherwise. As to the employment of my thoughts while waking, I can generally only endeavour to practise submission; or, rather, to ask it from above. I feel, I trust, that I have great things to ask for; and that a due sense of their greatness gives occupation, at all seasons, to the mind and heart. But, where Doddridge soared, I can only look up, and ask the wings of the Spirit, that I may rise to the only true rest of the soul.

Michael has been reading to me several of John Bowdler's tracts; viz., on the Love of God, of Trust in God, of Spiritual Mindedness, and of Prayer. He had learned a theology which makes

him, sometimes, speak differently from what I think. But his sense of religion, his views of the Christian graces and the interior life, and his deep love of God and of that purity of heart which alone can enjoy God, are altogether so sterling and so exalted, that I do not wonder he was removed from a scene to which, notwithstanding his talents for business, his nobler qualities were not congenial; and in which, had he been suffered to remain here, his glowing piety might, in spite of all his sincere efforts, have been dimmed, if not damped, "with the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould."

My love ever attends you all.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR —,

May 20, 1823.

THE violent symptoms of nervousness, which gave me the first serious alarm, have certainly abated; but the derangement of the digestive organs is obstinate and distressing; indeed, much more distressing than I can attempt to describe: and I am sorry to say, that my rest has been for some days more affected than it had been yet; so that I really have nothing for it but to trust in Him who does all things well, and who is a present help in trouble, for man can do nothing for me. Were I to state particulars, you would only be pained; and, therefore, I do not tell you any thing more than may serve to let you see that I am still a

complete invalid. At the same time, I am well aware that, if it should please God at any moment to readjust my wayward stomach, the uncomfortable feelings would instantly cease, and usual ease and health return.

I am as much as ever persuaded that it is all intended for my good; though there are times when I am, as it were, on the verge of thinking otherwise. But I hope the all-gracious God will enable me “in patience to possess my soul:” and, if so, that very lesson will be invaluable when, at length, more serious trials,—not merely, as now, agitating the vital frame, but actually assailing it that it may be demolished,—must be experienced. But, I believe, the great purpose of all afflictions, where God is really feared, is to oblige us to cleave more closely to Him, by allowing us no other source of consolation.

I have read a little yesterday and to-day. My very limited reading to-day has been in a little book, now lying before me, of Matthew Henry’s, “The Pleasantness of a Religious Life.” I only read the first three pages, with the address to the reader, and I think it a good little book, and very fit to be given to young people.

You ask me about Mr. Grant’s speech. My dear ———, though I am writing thus to you, I am too ill to listen even to that, or to employ my thoughts on any subject, except that which alone suits my case. I suppose nothing bodily, which is not deadly, so indisposes the mind for taking interest in common things as such stomach derangement as I now am suffering; and if I do not yet

suffer more, I may think myself very gently afflicted.

May 22, 1828.

* * * * * About myself I need say little more than what I have already intimated. The truth is, my paroxysms of nervousness are very strange things; and being now less in my corporeal frame, they have become, I think, not less distressing, because they seem to be more seated in my mental feelings. I trust the merciful God will support me, and preserve me from being tempted above what I am able to bear, and make it all subservient to kind and gracious purposes. At this moment, though distressed, I seem to feel that a touch of his hand on my imagination and thinking faculty would at once relieve me.

June 10, 1828.

* * * * * I have, as much as ever, the greatest reason to thank God for gracious and merciful alleviations. The sleeping now for eleven nights together, without painful waking in any one of them, is itself a great mercy: my power of reading, though sometimes a little threatened, is another; and I have as much reason as ever for trusting that all I have suffered, or am still suffering, has come upon me for my greater good; and, to the present moment, I have found my greatest fears to prove unfounded,—I mean the fear of growing absolutely worse, or of being oppressed beyond submissive endurance.

June 13, 1828.

* * * * * When I considered my de-

pression yesterday to have been really one of fear, rather than of actual feeling, though there was feeling, I could not but blame myself for a palpable want of confidence in God; and, when I found the night passing over so much more quietly than I had looked forward to, I was pleased somewhat to think that I had so blamed myself. I hope I shall, at length, possess a stronger faith in God than I have yet exercised; and I still trust that He means to lead me to that, and other similar blessings, by the chastisement He has been pleased to lay upon me.

June 16, 1828.

Hitherto I have been so preserved from every thing really overwhelming, and have found such alleviations when my apprehensions have been most oppressive, that I should be ungrateful, as well as most unwise, if I should dare to form a wish for any thing else than that which God is pleased to order respecting me, because that must be for the best.

June 20, 1828.

I thank you for your kind note, received yesterday; but I must only write a line or two, as I do not think it does me good to write about myself, and I am afraid that I have reason this day to be cautious about using my eye.

I do not yet grow better. I have, however, infinite cause of thankfulness that I do not grow worse; and, besides, I have so many evidences that my indisposition is not merely nervous, but rather a real derangement of the digestive organs, that I cannot but hope for amendment when the

proper time has come: providentially, when God sees it best for me; naturally, when the malady has gone its course. I must add, that the continuance of my constitutional disposition to sleep is an unspeakable mercy to me. I have had some unrestful nights; very few, if more than one, entirely without rest: but, in general, I sleep (waking pretty often, however, but still falling asleep again) even in spite of nervous uneasiness, except when it is very severe. And while this, as I said, is an unspeakable mercy, I am ready to infer from it that the disease, however distressing in itself, has not gained ground upon my actual constitution.

I have thus thought it right to tell you exactly how I think myself, lest you should suppose me worse than I really am. I must add, that I have had, for some days, less dread of the warm weather than I had at first; and I should not omit that, when I am very apprehensive of increased uneasiness, my fears are not realised: this has been often the case. Indeed I have, on the whole, every reason to acknowledge the Divine mercy, and to leave myself unreservedly in the Divine hands.

You are reasonable, and like to know things as they are; and, accordingly, I have simply told you my real state.

I need not add that I write this note to — as really as to you. I am deeply sensible of the interest you both take in my happiness; and I wish you to feel the same submission to the wise and gracious order of Providence which I wish to feel myself.

Ever hers and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

August 5, 1828.

* * * * I am, this day, able to say little: I have hurt myself by incautious over-talking, and am less easy than I was this morning. But I may just say this:—that I meant no more by what I said of the evangelicals as they are called, than that they have been the chief instruments of maintaining experimental religion in the reformed Churches. And however this may have been done, I must think it an invaluable blessing. I did not mean to speak particularly of those who are now active, but of the entire genus. And I did not mean that I thought otherwise of them, than I did when you and I were last talking on the subject; but that my own increased exigencies had made me more alive to the value of that power of religion, and of those communications of Divine grace, of which they (with the exception of John Wesley) had been hitherto the most zealous maintainers. I seemed to myself, also, to feel that,—whatever errors might be mingled with their views of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,—when really devout (as Doddridge, for instance), they had a cordial, and, as it were, vital, apprehension of our blessed Saviour, which gave them an advantage over me in a day of trouble: the attainment of which, in a strictly scriptural way (I might say, as to the substance of the blessing, in George Herbert's way), would be to me an unspeakable happiness in sickness and in health, in life and in death.

My love to my dear friend.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MRS. LA TOUCHE,

August 12, 1828.

* * * * I have had severe attacks of nervous headach : in particular, during the latter part of Sunday night : insomuch that, early yesterday morning, I sent for Nicholls to put a blister on the back of my neck. He thought it, at all events, not a bad thing in such a case as mine. But I soon found I had been more frightened than hurt ; for, before the blister could have any effect, the headach so far subsided that I fell asleep, and slept quietly for, I suppose, at least an hour.

In consequence of a night almost wholly restless, I sent for Dr. Marsh ; I could not be sure of getting Dr. Perceval until far onward in the forenoon. Dr. M. is a very acute man ; but he is not as encouraging to me as Dr. Cheyne was, though neither does he discourage me. But I do not give up Dr. Cheyne's well-considered consolations for the less cheering answers to my, perhaps, too urgent questions, from either Dr. Perceval or Dr. Marsh. They have told me what *may* arise out of my malady, judging from experience and medical science. Dr. Cheyne has uniformly expressed more confidence of a favourable issue, not merely from medical science, but from his knowledge of my constitution. Doubtless, Dr. Perceval and Dr. Marsh said nothing but what was right for them to say ; which was, simply, that such maladies had sometimes an unfavourable issue ; and that, con-

sidering all my symptoms, it was not possible to pronounce on what might be. The failing of the brain in some way or other, is, of course, the possible calamity. But, whatever I may dread when under the actual pressure of nervous head-ach, I am conscious, on the whole, of such unaltered mind,—and I would almost say animal spirits,—and such yet unbroken soundness in all respects, that I cannot but look forward to eventual recovery, rather than to any calamitous issue. Whatever I may yet have to suffer, I am disposed, with God's blessing, to retain confidence that my brain is as little liable to give way, as that of most persons. Therefore, on the whole, I think it right to repel such thoughts; and commit myself to that mercy and goodness, which I have so often and so signally experienced.

My love to my dear friends.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

August 16, 1828.

* * * I feel that I must wait the time of Providence, and, for the present, submit to the chastisement which God is pleased to lay upon me. But I really am not discouraged, except at moments of peculiar pressure, when a strange feeling in my head seems to be supporting Dr. Perceval's worst possible apprehensions. Yet I am always soon relieved; and immediately feel

the unfoundedness of my fears, which trust in the goodness of Him who never rejects those who seek Him, ought to prevent me from admitting for a moment.

I have still great reason to be thankful for the alleviations which the mercy of God vouchsafes to me, particularly the power of reading, and the tendency to sleep, even when I am under nervous oppression. And, besides, I most thankfully own that I am blessed with a continuance of good spirits; which I must regard as proceeding, I trust, from a higher source than any thing in my own mental or bodily nature. I cannot doubt, also, but that there may be (I ought to say, are) the wisest and most gracious purposes in this painful dispensation. I even seem to myself to see the reasonableness of this hope, and my own need of some deeper training in the school of the Divine Master, so clearly, that I dare not even form a wish but that He may support me in the trial, preserve me from extremity, and give me a happy issue, when He sees it best for me. My love to my dear friends.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO _____.

Oct. 8, 1828.

* * * * I know no writer who has gone at large into the subject of the sacrifice on the cross, and has at all departed from the common theory, who has not verged toward the theory of

the Socinians. For my own part, I have endeavoured to admit no human theory whatever, but to derive all my conclusions from the representations of Holy Scripture; particularly from the Epistle to the Hebrews, compared with those parts of the Pentateuch to which reference is made in those chapters in which the subject is discussed; that is, in the eighth, ninth, and the former part of the tenth chapters. I need not name the parts of the Pentateuch, as the marginal references will afford sufficient direction. I fully feel that it is a deep subject, and to be approached with the utmost reverence. And I trust it is my sincere wish (as, I am sure, it is also yours), to receive without adding to, diminishing, or forcing beyond its clear and natural import, whatever is declared in the word of inspiration on this subject or on any other, respecting which we deem it necessary to form a decided judgment.

Oct. 15, 1828.

* * * * I believe you mistake my feelings, when you suppose me to be relapsing into old prejudices. It is always my wish to look at both sides of a question. Were we now conversing, I think I could make it clear to you, that what I said in my last note is in perfect consistency with all the opinions I have been expressing during the last thirty years. I have ever deprecated the possibility of Roman Catholics having room to infer that they could accomplish any thing by intimidation. And I doubt whether, to their gross minds, movements somewhat like their own may not be the aptest means of repressing that

pernicious (and, I earnestly hope, confounded) expectation.

Oct. 23, 1828.

* * * * I mean, please God, to send you, by the next opportunity, a little tract of Thomas Scott's; which I could wish you to read, taking your own time for doing so; for you, of course, are not to return it. On the point of justification, it rises to the highest pinnacle of Calvinistic theology:—but strictly Calvinistic, without verging to ultraism of any kind. All that, however, did not, to my mind, neutralise the practical spirit of the entire work. I am not sure that his zeal against antinomianism may not have made him unnecessarily copious: but, on the whole, it seems to me to be the most decisive refutation of the notion of “believing the record,” and trusting in that belief, as settling every thing at once, that could have been written. I was so pleased with it, that I got ten of them from London. I was interested, two years ago, by the short account of it in Scott's Life. But, though I often looked for it, like the volume of Chrysostom, it got out of view; and I did not discover it till about three weeks since. I must say, that in spite of its Calvinism, I was greatly pleased (and, I might almost add, delighted) with the resistless attack it makes on all self-delusive views of faith; the masterly demonstration from Scripture and reason, that saving faith is, and must be, a business, not of the understanding, but of the heart; and the enlightened liberality with which he allows and maintains, that this “believing with the heart unto righteousness”

may be where there is, “as yet,” little, if any thing, of doctrinal correctness. On the whole, it is, in my judgment, the best tract I ever read from the modern Calvinistic school.

My love to my dear friends.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

November 6, 1828.

You will be pleased to know that I read every word of your interesting note without the least sensible injury to my eye, which I hope is mending: but it is, still, somewhat ailing.

I thank you, with all my heart, for your looking forward with interest to some talk with me. You know how I have been ever glad to have conversation with you: and if I could afford any satisfaction in any matter to your mind, it would gratify me more than I can express.

There is one good rule which I could wish you to keep always in view; namely, that what is unequivocally said, in any one part of the New Testament, cannot, possibly, be elsewhere contradicted. To no instance is this rule more applicable, than to those words of our Lord to which you refer. The fact of Divine goodness to all, without the shadow of a shade of doubt, can never be disputed, consistently with right reason, or due regard to Him who, in that declaration, as well as in so many other instances, has given us the happy

assurance that, in God, we have not an inexorable Judge, but an infinitely gracious Father.

There is another matter, which you no less think of vital consequence ; namely, that we must believe nothing which is inconsistent with the co-essential Deity of the Son. Whatever, therefore, our Saviour did for us, to facilitate our approach to God, must be considered as done with the same reference to his own Divine nature, as to that of the Father. And, consequently, we must understand the great work of redemption, as not less a redeeming of us to Himself than to his heavenly Father. This is the doctrine laid down by St. Paul, in that beautiful passage, Titus, ii. 12-14 : “ And to purify to himself a peculiar people.”

Besides, He, especially, it is, who is King of the Church and the world, and who will be the Judge of both. Whatever, therefore, there is of severity in the Gospel system, the exercise of that severity belongs, peculiarly, to the Son. But to whom was he severe when on earth ? Was it not, evidently, where, in reason, he could not be no other than severe ? And will He, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, be of a different nature on his final judgment throne, from that which he manifested in the days of his flesh ?

He best understood his own nature, and his own dispensation ; and his divine conduct on earth is the surest, and only sure, demonstration of both. In what he says of himself, there is nothing to perplex the honest mind, but every thing to assure and satisfy it. If it were duly remembered that he is “ God, blessed for evermore,” would not

every suspicion of the Divine character forthwith vanish in the cheering effulgence of that unqualified graciousness with which we have to do? All gloomy dogmas should, in reason, retreat from this light, like birds of darkness from the rising sun. I humbly think that, in the illumination of this "dayspring from on high," there should be no puzzle about doctrines, nor questionings about the terms on which upright persons stand with their God. "Behold," said he, "my mother and my brethren:" and, again, "Henceforth, I call you not servants, but friends." To what was Immanuel severe, but to sin and to incorrigible sinners?

In this view of God, we are really drawn to him, as our happiness; a thing strangely overlooked in modern divinity; but beautifully stated in the first four paragraphs of Leighton's 17th Prelection. Read it, I pray you, in the Latin. I must stop.

My love to my dear friends.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR —,

Nov. 14, 1828.

I THANK you for your kind note, which I was glad to receive; but I am sorry to tell you my eye has not yet begun to amend; at least, not in any certain way.

I think you need not be startled at the fact, that those who have rejected the popular view of our Saviour's death, have, as yet, generally

adopted either broad Socinianism, or something approaching to it ; for, as yet, how little disposition has there been to enter into the spiritual import of that great mystery ! And yet there was, otherwise, no alternative but to adhere to the popular view, or to verge toward the Socinian hypothesis.

You will, yourself, at once perceive that such, hitherto, is the truth of the case ; and, when you consider how seldom an investigating mind, and a deeply devout heart, have been associated, you will scarcely wonder that the spiritual view of our Saviour's death has been so rarely made a subject of close consideration.

The popular view of our Saviour's death has, undoubtedly, been subservient to sincere and cordial piety ; and, even where good understanding has been united with the religion of the heart, there has seldom been a disposition to question the common representation. No doubt, to have questioned it, would, generally, to such persons, have appeared very dangerous. Besides, too, as exemplified in Baxter, Fuller, Doddridge, and most pious Christians who thought at all closely on the subject, the vicarious view has been held with important modifications ; probably little differing from what you read in Lightfoot.

I confess, therefore, that when the doctrine is so held, I should be little disposed, for the mere sake of more correct belief (however in my judgment, scriptural), to disturb the common persuasion ; especially, as room may have been purposely left open for such construction—a construction which the event has shewn to be suitable

to the generality, hitherto, of upright minds. But, to those who wished to think for themselves, and to penetrate the treasures of Divine truth, I would venture to put this practical question : Have very many of even the most pious believers in the strictly vicarious sacrifice of our Lord, been equally attentive to the spiritual view of that sacrifice given by our Lord himself, and by St. Paul, and, I may add, by St. Peter and St. John ? Or has it, on the contrary, been the fact, that, in general, they have so fixed on the former view, as to pay little adequate attention to the latter ? I cannot but think that this is a weighty inquiry, and quite remote from controversy. It seems to me, that this great topic prevails throughout the New Testament ; and the passages relating to it are the profoundest parts of that Sacred Volume. What our Lord himself says on this subject, is never to be overlooked. I cannot enumerate instances ; but I would particularly mention his language in St. John, vi. 51, and following verses ; and in St. John, xii. 24, &c. In St. Paul, it appears to me that the spiritual power of our Saviour's death and resurrection is dwelt upon as the very kernel and heart's heart of the Gospel. For example, in the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the 3d chapter to the Philippians. But, I might ask, where does it not occur ? Or what else is so dwelt upon ?

Yet, I ask again, does this life and soul of the Gospel engage that attention, which, both in quality and quantity, it demands ? The fathers did not overlook it : St. Chrysostom and St. Au-

gustin had it ever in view. And pious Roman Catholic writers, down to Nicole, following the Fathers, have given it, according to their light, the weight which it deserved. But who, yet, have rightly done this, among Protestants? And, if it be not yet done, is there not a deep want to be supplied? John Wesley touches it in his Notes on the New Testament. Doddridge was far from meaning to overlook it. But, I finally ask, who has done it justice? And why have they not, where Christian piety was unequivocal?

Do we, then, wish to avoid all that is anti-scriptural on the one hand, or ultra-scriptural on the other? Let us examine the New Testament itself, and weigh, and connect, and compare those wonderful passages; and embrace, unreservedly, their divinely concurrent import.

My love to my dear friends.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

November 18, 1828.

* * * * You could yourself, I believe, answer Mr. G. for me about the passage in the Romans. In one point, Erskine and I agree. I, no more than he, think that St. Paul means to guard his already delivered doctrine; for I see nothing to be guarded in it. If it was forensic righteousness of which he had been treating, such a guard might have been apposite to the

subject. But if his great and leading topic was the righteousness of faith working by love,—the *δωρεὰ* (τῆς δικαιοσύνης), ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, through which grace, “having been made free from sin,” they to whom St. Paul was writing had become “servants of righteousness,”—what was there to be guarded?

My opinion is, that the supposed objection (chap. vi. 1) is founded exclusively on the position respecting the abounding of sin, and the superabounding of grace, in the case of the Jewish nation, and that the Apostle made that remark in the 20th verse of the eighth chapter, merely for the purpose of introducing the next portion of his discourse; in which, instead of guarding, he seems to me admirably, and indeed exquisitely, to develop the interior of what he had delivered in the former chapter, both as to the means of operation, and the completeness of growing result. The means of operation, I conceive, are explained in the third and following verses, to about the ninth; the results, from the seventeenth to the end: in all which wonderful discourse it seems to me impossible to discover any thing which is not moral and spiritual. And how Mr. Erskine could contrive to legalise it to his own mind, I cannot explain; nor do I think that his criticism on the two Greek verbs (which may possibly be just) is any thing to his purpose. His comment on those commencing verses of the sixth chapter, is one of the instances, I conceive, of overlooking the spiritualities of the Gospel, through attachment to supposed doctrinal truths. Honest Thomas Scott,

though with doctrinal mixture, gives a far happier interpretation.

I hope to hear speedily from you, and am

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

January 9th, 1829.

* * * * I AM glad you liked my criticism on Rom. vii. 25. The truth is, that the philological exactness of St. Paul far transcends that of all other writers with whom I am acquainted. I except the other Apostolic writers, who, also, are singularly exact. Besides, there are, if I mistake not, some peculiarities in his philology, which are worthy of the strictest attention. There is one instance in which our translators have strangely misrepresented the uniform propriety of his diction; and which I could wish corrected, were it possible. I mean their making him use the name of God, where he did not think of using it. I allow there was nothing very wrong in introducing the sacred name in such instances as Rom. vi. 2 and 15; because, in both cases, there was, in some measure, a "*dignus vindice nodus*." But I am annoyed by the same liberty being taken in 1 Cor. iv. 8; where, doubtless, St. Paul was speaking as lightly as he ever did in any instance. It strikes me, therefore, as quite unseemly to have rendered the rhetorical word ὁφείλον by the solemn expression, "I would to God." St. Paul was a right good judge when to

speak with solemnity; and, therefore (Acts, xxvi. 29), he most properly introduces the name.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO —.

MY DEAR —,

January 20th, 1829.

* * * Jonathan Edwards's work on the affections is highly valuable. He had witnessed great religious emotion, both in his own congregation and in other parts of New England. He saw much to be jealous of, even at the time; and published two successive tracts, both to plead for what he thought genuine, and to correct what he deemed erroneous. But, in a few years, though much of the good fruit seemed to remain, so great a part was blighted, that he thought it expedient to enter more deeply into the subject. And hence proceeded his book on the affections. Doubtless there never was a book of the kind written with closer consideration, sounder judgment, or deeper knowledge of the subject. And his exposure of spurious emotions, and false marks of Divine Grace, are most valuable. But, in the course of this work, I think he goes into an extreme with respect to disinterested love as the basis of experimental religion. I am assured there is a basis of truth in the position; and, to constitute true love of God, He must be loved as the *Summum Bonum*. But, in order to be loved with fulness of affection, He must be loved, not only for what He is in himself, but as

our *Summum Bonum*, as that which is the supreme matter of our happiness. And therefore, as I take it, the self-love which our Lord recognises in the case of social love, must enter radically into the earliest workings of Divine love : without the combined feeling, we cannot, I conceive, duly apprehend the Divine amiability. In fact, to love, is to connect our own happiness with that to which we are attached. If this be wanting, it will be esteem, or admiration, or an union of both ; but there will be a want of tenderness, I should think, and of that filial familiarity and union of heart to which every representation in the New Testament conspires to invite us. Now, here it is that I have suspected a defect in Mr. Edwards's work. Indeed, I have thought there appeared some such want in all he says in his account of his own first impressions of religion. Not hence inferring that his own religion was imperfect ; but that he felt according to his own peculiar nature. His highly metaphysical mind was, probably, not capable of tender affection. And observe how much he dwells on the apprehension of God as a business of taste, illustrating his view by an extract from Chambers's Encyclopædia. I do not dispute for a moment the justness, generally, of his remarks, or the appositeness of the quotation. I merely suspect that he fixes his mind's eye too centrally on this aspect of the Divine Being. And, had it been otherwise, it might not have been so easy for him to adopt his rigid notion of election. I can imagine his reconciling this supposed character of God with all that his disinterested love implied ; for this simple reason, that it was so dis-

interested as not to require pure amiability in its object, but to rest upon what was adorable rather than demand what was essentially tender and gracious.

This has been for some years a persuasion of mine respecting Mr. Edwards's book. It is to be observed, that good Thomas Scott (as stern a Calvinist as himself) thought his disinterestedness of spiritual love excessive, though he admired his sobriety and morality.

I hope to say something about the Apocalypse soon.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO —.

MY DEAR —,

January 27, 1829.

* * * * I am far from being yet equal to a renewed correspondence with Mr. —. Were he ever so disposed to it, I should be obliged to deprecate re-engagement of that kind. For, however highly I admire his brilliancy of thought, and felicity of expression, he is too volant for my less lively movement of mind, and too theoretical for the more strictly practical view which I am (I would hope more than ever) inclined to take of theological subjects. There are certain great points as to the interpretation of the New Testament, about which I am deeply solicitous; chiefly the ruling moral import of "the everlasting Gospel." Yet, however substantially Mr. — and I may agree on this central and vital point, judging by the past, I should fear that in every fresh

letter, instead of closely adhering to that particular, and to obtaining additional rays of Scriptural light bearing upon it, he would so diverge into collateral thoughts, as to make it very difficult to pursue a straightforward line of Scriptural investigation, by which alone the truth of the case can be established.

The fact is, that the more I read and think, and look around me, my conviction increases that the oversight of the supreme moral purpose of the Gospel is the dominant error of the present day ; and that the clouds which envelope the religious world at this time, and which (it may be feared) are producing deep and extensive delusion, can only be dispelled by ascertaining the real import of Evangelical doctrine : I mean, by its being acknowledged and felt, that the supreme design of the Gospel is to teach us effectually “ to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” And that whatever other results were provided for by our Lord’s death, this moral result is the one great end asserted by St. Paul ; that is, not barely the literal, but the greatly heightened realisation of the propounded purpose, “ He gave himself for us, to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” I would ask, is there in the Evangelical volume a more direct, comprehensive, definitive statement of that object of our blessed Saviour’s humiliation and death, which was supremely contemplated in the whole stupendous procedure ?

Yours ever,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

February 17, 1829.

* * * * *

P. S. How awful was the death of poor ———! Though it began in cramp, the stomach was, doubtless, the source of the malady from first to last. What must the next world be to those who have not thought of it! (though the matter of personal responsibility is known only to God and his holy angels.) But, indeed, what must it be, even to those who have thought of it most! *Βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι.* The solid satisfaction is (a matter, happily, not merely of *πίστις* but of *ἐπίγνωσις*, if we duly use our advantages) *ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε ἐκπίπτει.* We, therefore, may anticipate the substance, though we can form no conception of the circumstantial alteration, and we may hope advancement.

A. K.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Feb. 27, 1829.

* * * * * I am told that Thursday next is to be the day of disclosure, by the Duke of Wellington himself, in the House of Lords: I suppose, that the question may be determined where the issue is more doubtful, before it goes to the Commons, where the event is certain. Besides, at that time there might be no proper person in the lower house to introduce it; as, if Mr. Peel be defeated at Oxford, some time must elapse, I suppose, before he could be returned for

another borough: the first mentioned is, I conceive, the great reason. I cannot but feel anxiety about the securities. And the more so, as the nature and extent of them have been so rigidly kept secret: probably, however, as much from jealousy of the factious opposers in Parliament, as of the Roman Catholics.

If I do not mistake myself, I am interested in the event of this great movement, from, I trust, some measure of Christian charity. I sincerely wish the more intelligent mass of Roman Catholics to be brought into circumstances in which they may be able to make a dispassionate comparison between their form of Christianity and ours. That this exercise of mind will necessarily grow up, so soon as the existing grounds of quarrel are removed, I cannot have a doubt. And I am no less persuaded, that real and safe reformation can arise only from the enlarged and enlightened views of the more capable, and naturally influential, portion of the body. The efforts now made to work upon the lower classes are, I should think, very questionable in their nature, and doubtful in their results. We know not what kind of religion they are taught to adopt, in the place of that which they are urged to relinquish. And the manner in which the passions are called into action, both on the one side and on the other, makes the whole business unsatisfactory to an impartial spectator. I believe I once before quoted on this subject the wise observation of St. James, "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." And it seems to me, that at this time there is too much

of a wrathful zeal against the Roman Catholic religion. Its low and grovelling character, and its degrading subjugation to the mystery of iniquity, it is right to recognise; the honour and credit of Christianity require that we should do so. But it is no hinderance to this recognition, that we should be, also, sensible of the providential purposes for which this travestie of our pure and rational religion has been permitted. The apparent necessity of this permission in the barbarous ages, can be disputed only by those who deny the importance of a national profession of Christianity. For how, in dark times, could professional habits have been formed, and made permanent, but by an accommodation of circumstances to the merely sensitive perception of all ranks and conditions of men? I cannot, therefore, but resolve the accommodation which actually, and most effectively, took place, in some respect, into the *πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ*. And, by parity of reason, I must in like manner account for the partial continuance of what, for so many ages, was the almost universal religion of Western Europe. I must think that the season for extended reformation has not yet arrived; and that something better than what could now be substituted, may possibly be waited for.

My beloved Dr. Cheyne has sat with me until I have only time to add, that

I am ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

March 30, 1829.

* * * * There is certainly a good deal of expressed dissatisfaction respecting the putting down of the Jesuits, &c. Not, however, I suppose, among the Roman Catholics at large, but probably among the clergy, as if it were making very free with their religion generally. And yet I cannot lament that such a course should be taken, as I regard them in no other light than as agents of "The Mystery of Iniquity." They have been often elegant scholars, and their seminaries have been famed for an exactness of moral discipline, unmatched in any other instance. They have seemed to have a sort of intuitive view of the conduct of their pupils, who, from some kind of management, never could be sure that they had not an eye upon them. They had the art, however, of generally attaching to them those whom they educated; an instance of which I found in my old friend Kirwan, who seemed to wince at the very name of Nicole, on account of the notes which, under the name of Wendroe, he appended to (I believe) a Latin translation of the "Provincial Letters." * * *

I am reading with much pleasure a volume of sermons by Bishop Heber, very lately published. It contains some things I cannot agree with; but his manner is interesting, natural, simple, and often beautiful, giving evidence, besides, of no little learning. I advise you to get them.

I am gratified by the kind remembrance of

Mrs. Hannah More, and feel grateful to Mr. Stock and Mr. Butterworth for thinking of me so kindly. Adieu.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO ———.

April 8, 1829.

* * * * I need not assure you how deeply I feel for you, and with you; but my humble trust is, that the good God will keep you both in his gracious hand, working effectually upon you by his grace, guiding you by his counsel, and guarding you by his providence. Nor will you, in particular, have the less share in these invaluable blessings because you have even a painful sense of your own weakness and ignorance: such a sense is the necessary result of sound self-knowledge; and, if real, it must be attended, at least occasionally, with pain, particularly in circumstances which employ thought and call forth exertion. But this very feeling may be necessary to the real exercise of that reliance on which alone the safety of life depends. “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding: in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

April 14, 1829.

* * * * You have seen, no doubt, ——’s appointment, which Mr. —— told me yesterday, was a very popular act of the duke. I, however, leave it to itself: I am not disposed, nor,

indeed, qualified, to judge in such matters. I trust supreme Wisdom will order all things, great and minute, for what will be best in the event; and to that superintendence I wish to commit all public, as well as private, occurrences.

What I most regret is, that at this day, as much as ever before, there seems to be a dearth of sober thinkers. The mysterious purposes of Providence may, doubtless, be served by actors of little thought, who either themselves proceed on the spur of the occasion, or follow the present prevalent course. But truth, as well as spirit, is so much a part of the Divine economy, and our blessed Saviour himself is so essentially "the wisdom of God," as well as "the power of God," as to warrant the conclusion that, in his mystical kingdom, there must be instruments qualified to think deeply, as well as others disposed to act ardently. I almost doubt, however, whether the time for thinking at once deeply, comprehensively, and humbly, be yet come. We have had some fine specimens of what may hereafter be still more perfectly exemplified: wonderfully, though limitedly, in Robert Boyle; in a very mixed but still more interesting way, in Jonathan Edwards; and admirably in some respects, yet, I should think, deficiently in others, in Butler's "Analogy." But I must say, notwithstanding, that this last work has in it, perhaps, more pregnant principles of truth than ever were furnished before. What I value him for, however, is the moral ground on which he proceeds, in all his reasonings both on natural and revealed religion.

It is a curious fact, that among the religious works lately republished in Scotland, by such men as Chalmers, Erskine, &c., Butler's "Analogy" should have been one, with an ample introductory discourse by Daniel Wilson. I have not got it; but Mr. Wilson's letter in the "Christian Observer," in favour of the Relief Bill, has made me think of looking into it. I have found remarks in that letter, which raise Mr. Wilson in my esteem: for example—"Repeal the disabling statutes, he says, and you will see peace and amity gradually restored; education and scriptural knowledge diffused; prejudice and passion insensibly abated; inquiry into the foundations of the Protestant religion awakened; adherence to the errors of an ancient faith loosened; the superadditions of human invention dropping off; the tyranny and subtilty of priestcraft detected; the Bible calmly read and studied; Popery, in its essential mischiefs, tacitly forgotten; the religion of Thomas à Kempis, of Pascal, of Nicole, of Quesnel, and of Fénelon, revived, if not that of Jewell and Latimer, Hooker and Hall, Leighton and Beveridge." I need not tell you how far I am from agreeing in the specific view which is here contemplated; but there seems to me a substance of liberality, as well as good sense, in it, which I recognise with sincere pleasure.

April 27, 1829.

I had the comfort, on Saturday, of receiving your kind letter; and was glad to infer from it that matters were going on reasonably well, both with — and yourself. I was amused by the

addition which it contains to what I had already heard of the king's talk with the bishops. I think he, altogether, performed his part with great address; and, no doubt, has succeeded in softening the irritation which the unlooked-for conjuncture was producing in their minds. Assuredly, man is always, from the laws of his nature, impressible by illusions; and human life would be a tame and prosy thing were it not for this tendency, which operates exceedingly in the matter of distinction and rank. Of course, in no instance more sensibly than in that of majesty. There is, perhaps, no mind which would not be, more or less, fascinated by well managed royal affability. And it seems as if our present gracious sovereign knew, tolerably well, how to use his advantage.

I have seen ——'s letters. You certainly say nothing of them but what they deserve. They are perfectly natural, and, at the same time, give evidence of practical talent and great good sense. It seems to me that there is much promise in them of what the mental character will be, when, as you observe, ripened by time and formed by habit and experience. I should think him uncommonly fit for his destined employment; and deem it not unlikely that he may at length, if Providence spare him, recommend himself to distinguished notice. Not to be liable to say or do any thing foolish or precipitate—and, along with this, to manifest at all times quickness of apprehension and adequate self-possession,—are valuable qualifications for a person possessing any public trust; and cannot fail to insure success in circumstances where the

principle of *detur digniori* must necessarily be acted on.

I had yesterday, I may say for the first time, an actual visit from ———. He is not prompt to talk, and, therefore, I was obliged to talk to him. He shewed himself to be interested, and the little he said was pertinent and satisfactory. I was led to speak of the state of the times, and the growing self-confidence of the present generation, which seemed to me to threaten an increasing contempt for revealed religion; and, of consequence, to require in all who revered religion a thorough knowledge of the evidences by which Christian faith was established: one of which evidences (and, in my mind, an irrefragable one,) was, that the grand desideratum of man's mental and moral nature was exquisitely met and supplied in the Christian dispensation. To shew the precise nature of the felt want, I read him some striking passages in the *Phædon* of Plato, and then pointed to certain fundamental principles in the New Testament, which answered to these desiderata of the pagan sage with an appositeness and a completeness which were no less wonderful than convincing. I ventured to pronounce our Lord's words, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," to be the dominant principle in the Gospel; with which St. Paul's words of the *φρόνημα σαρκὸς* being *θάνατος* and *ἔχθρα εἰς τὸν Θεόν*, and the *φρόνημα πνεύματος*, on the contrary, being *ζωὴ καὶ εἰρήνη*, so strictly corresponded, as to make both passages in conjunction a compendious, but most luminous, notification of man's one great

object as a moral and immortal creature. And I called upon him to judge, whether the aspiration of Plato, and the provision in those Divine declarations, did not so agree as to shew that the identical happiness which had been contemplated, however imperfectly, by Plato, was most substantially that which was "brought to light by the Gospel." As I went along, he sometimes expressed wonder; and told me, finally, that he thought I had made out a strong case. In truth, he seemed to be so impressed with my statements, as to make it to me a very pleasant hour. * * *

It seems fixed that there are to be poor laws of some kind or other in Ireland. Such poor laws as are in England would be, I should think, calamitous. But to give parishes a power of raising contributions for the relief of absolute distress, might, I imagine, be a good measure. What the House of Commons, however, will do in any matter whatever, is painfully problematical. They have done one right thing, because it happened to accord with their views; but how many not right things they may be disposed to do, I reflect with anxiety.

May 1, 1829.

* * * * It is painful to reflect, how few persons there are at present qualified to write really useful books; and yet, to perceive the confidence with which the popular writers on religion pour forth their conceptions, as if what they were uttering defied contradiction. It is a happy thing that we have writings of other times to turn to, or we should be at a deplorable loss for useful

reading. And it is still more comfortable that we have such a body of irresistible evidence ; that the blessings of Christianity have been effectually and eminently enjoyed by a “ cloud of witnesses,” who never employed their minds on speculative doctrines, and who, in fact, had perfectly different views of Christian doctrine, in many respects, from those which are now so much relied upon.

I have just finished, in my daily reading, the First Epistle of St. Peter ; and I cannot help thinking that it is an invaluable part of the Christian volume. The internal evidence which it affords in support of the Christian verity in general, is as decisive as the principles which it lays down ; and the spirit which it breathes is a full and perfect exemplification, as well as epitome, of the sum and substance of practical Christianity. This latter character of it, no right-hearted Christian can overlook ; but its value, as matter of evidence, may not be adverted to even by devout readers. Yet to consider it in this light, may make it a source of the deepest edification. For as Richard Baxter has justly observed, there is far more of mental infidelity in the coldness of the heart toward religion, than is generally supposed. And, therefore, the deeper and more established our rational conviction of the truth of Christianity is, the more solid will be our practical principles, and the more of natural habit will there be in our religious frame of mind : our apprehensions of Divine realities will have more of common sense in them ; and we shall be affected by them in the same way as by those unquestioned and unquestionable present

facts, on which we act in the common concerns of life. The growth of such a mental habit is, clearly, of unspeakable importance: and a constant attention to the internal marks of authenticity in the New Testament will scarcely fail to promote it. St. Peter's character is as strongly marked as any recorded in history; and, therefore, the wonderful difference between the intimidated disciple, and the determined witness before the Sanhedrim, is one of the most striking features in the Evangelic history. Nothing could exceed his expressions of conviction and devotedness on this latter occasion; and it is obvious that it is the same man under the self-same impressions, allowing only for dissimilar circumstances, who so courageously maintains the truth of Christianity before the Jewish rulers, and so powerfully urges its inward nature and vital principles on the Christians whom he addresses. There are sometimes such glowing expressions, "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," as to be perfectly wonderful in the fisherman of Galilee. These, however, are discernible only in the original. For instance, the exhortation (chap. v. 5), *ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβάσασθε*; the latter word strongly expressing, not merely clothing for convenience, but clothing for ornament; as if humility would set off the person in whom it uniformly and naturally appeared, as an external robe of the most graceful form would set off the wearer. Another bold metaphor occurs in the 8th verse of the same chapter, applied to the devil, *ζητῶν τίνα καταπίη*—"Seeking whom he may swallow down."

May 9, 1829.

I trust that something better than my own mere turn of mind has taught me to form no other than cheering views of our holy religion. Gray's expression of "the sunshine of the breast," seems to me to be its just and exquisite description. The conception of such an idea shews what human nature pants after. And let sincere feelings of religion be ever so weak, so far as they are genuine, they imply at least a prelibation of that thing which we long for. But the words I have quoted lead me to think of our Lord's calling Christians "the light of the world;" and of his exhortation, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works," &c. Now, it could not be *their* light, if they themselves had not, in the first instance, the benefit and comfort of it. And, therefore, it must be to the possessor of it, "the sunshine of the breast." And, besides, our Lord's representing it as that which manifests good works, implies it to be a kind of luminous atmosphere around him who performs them; shewing whatever he does in its true light and its real excellence. St. Paul seems to convey this very thought (Rom. xii. 8) in the words, 'Ο ἐλεῶν, ἐν ἡλαρότητι, which hilarity could not be naturally expressed if it were not really possessed; and yet it is evident how much this adds to the act of beneficence. A gloomy view of things, therefore, never can fully realize our blessed Saviour's requisition; and yet he would require nothing which his Divine religion was not fitted to inspire. Consequently, his religion cannot have in it any really

gloomy feature. It must be like Him from whom it comes. "God is light; and in Him is no darkness at all."

Moral evil is, in fact, the only real darkness. And whoever is cordially desirous to be freed from this darkness, may fairly consider himself as within the dawn of pure and cloudless day. In loving light rather than darkness, he is beginning to love Him who is light: and all he need be anxious for, is to advance more and more in this feeling; which he cannot fail to do, if he guards what he already has of it, and continually asks for more. St. James's "wisdom" is the same thing, expressed by another term. And his advice is direct and simple: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The Gospel is that which has systematized and perfected this view of things. "I am come, a light, into the world;" that is, to be, in matters moral, what the sun is, in the material world, to the vegetable and animal creation. But this is a vast subject; and I must not hazard a remark on it, except to say, that this vital principle of the Gospel is, as yet, a wonderfully overlooked subject.

I wish you to read one of Leighton's discourses to his youths, even in preference to all the rest, valuable as I consider most of his prelections. It is the "Valedictoria Oratio," (page 263). It is very short; but it is a very full notification of his own view of things when he wrote it. It would seem that, but for his melancholy turn of mind, he would have felt like Bishop Kenn: "Of all the

truths,"* &c. A stanza, however, which contains the very pith and kernel of what I have just been endeavouring to express.

May 13, 1829.

I look forward to going out, perhaps soon; but I am not yet equal to it; though I rather believe I am gaining ground. At the same time, I am still nervous in an annoying, though, I thank God, not a distressing way. We know not what is best for us; and, therefore, I am disposed to leave myself, as implicitly as I can, in the hands of the same gracious Providence, which has graciously sustained me through the vicissitudes of life, and has done more for me than once I could have conceived imaginable, in matters respecting this world; and, I humbly trust, not less with respect to that which is to come. In the latter instance, I feel that I stand inexpressibly in need of being better fitted for the trials which still lie before me; those, I mean, of serious disease, actual decay, and final dissolution of this mortal body. * * *

I have got Heber's sermons in India; but I have not yet read more than Bishop Kaye's address, as I have not finished the former volume, and feel bound to it till I have ended it, by my respect for its author, and by the cordial transparency of the language. The feelings expressed, too, are ever amiable and excellent. He appears to have drawn

* "Of all the truths that from Thee shine,
Lord! thy philanthropy divine

Next to my heart still lies;

And turns my ghostly eyes

From all ill-natured schemes, designed

To bound what thou hast to no bounds confined."

no small portion of his mental comfort from the theories which he regarded as Christian verities. But it is rather in the way of many of our older divines, than in that of present popular writers. He has not, like the latter, embraced a system to which the whole strain of his discourse must be kept so accordant, as not to admit of either native freedom of sentiment, or unrestrained flow of heart.

May 20th, 1829.

* * * I need not tell you that — and yourself are present to my mind, morning, noon, and night. And, could I be at ease respecting her health and yours, I should feel, I believe I may say, all possible sympathetic pleasure in the rational gratification you must be receiving, and the valuable addition to your stock of ideas which a personal acquaintance with the great city necessarily implies. There is a certain want in the mind which neither reading nor thinking can supply, until you have really had before you this ample and adequate representation of the world. There is, clearly, nothing beyond it in greatness, in interest of every kind, in height of attainment, and in exemplification of human improvement. And, therefore, on the whole, I must regard it as the most desirable instance of external knowledge, at least to a native of the British Isles, that the world can afford.

Sept. 22, 1829.

I doubt if I am better in other respects; nor could I, in reason, expect it. But I trust I am not impatient; and, indeed, I have no reason. On the

contrary, I have great reason for gratitude, that, in point of suffering, my present case is a tolerable one in comparison with my distresses of last year. I, therefore, do assure — and yourself, that I think you have no reason to feel uneasiness about me. It would be pleasanter to my dear friends, as well as to myself, were I in moderate health; but what God orders must be best. It has pleased Him, from my early years, to do every thing that has been done by Divine goodness for my soul's good, through the medium of his own providential correction. And the entire retrospect affords me infinite reason for bowing before the all-gracious hand, which, I would fain hope, is now, perhaps still more beneficially, using the same process; probably, on the whole, the only process whereby I could have been saved, either for time or for eternity. I submit, on this ground, with cordial acquiescence, even to the present increased weakness of my head; which may be (I doubt not, is) a necessary part of the wise and kind discipline which has been hitherto used — I trust not without some good effect — toward me.

Sept. 25, 1829.

I was perfectly satisfied with your verbal answer to my note of Tuesday by —. In fact, there was nothing in it which required an answer.

There is something in the manner of — which seems to manifest a greatly improved mind. There seems to be a staidness and a gentleness in him now, which I never equally observed before. I could have little talk with him, for it pleases Providence that my head cannot, at present, bear

conversation. But the little I could listen to from him expressed a most sober spirit.

His subject was the present millenarian expectation ; which (he says) he knows nothing about ; and, therefore, when it is the subject of discourse, he has nothing to say. I could not, through inability to talk, attempt to aid him. But I, too, am very incompetent to discuss the point, from hearing so little of their system. Nor can I conceive on what ground they conclude the nearness of the advent which they suppose approaching. I am deeply persuaded the Apocalypse is so obscure a book, as to make it impossible to understand any part, at present, which has not been fulfilled. And I must think that the book itself affords no means of determining either the commencement or conclusion of the 1260 days ; on which, however, all great future events must depend.

I am sure it is better to think of our spiritual and everlasting salvation than of any thing else. In this solicitude there can be no delusion. We thus are preparing for all possible events. If even the advent of our Lord were at hand, we could not, in any way, be so well prepared for his visible appearing, as by our habitual desire and solicitation for his spiritual advent into our own hearts and minds.

My head is very middling to day. I walked yesterday and the day before. And Dr. Cheyne has been already with me, to order me to go out again to day. I must obey him ; though I do not think it (or, as yet, any thing) does me sensible good.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Wednesday, June 10, 1829.

* * * * Interiority is, in my estimation, one of the very safest and happiest habits which a human being can possess. It seems to me that it is peculiarly a disposition, which our adorable Redeemer was solicitous to infuse into all his faithful disciples. It appears to have been, in a remarkable degree, his own habitual feeling, and, as it were, his natural temper. And, even naturally, to resemble him in any thing, is surely one of the most valuable distinctions which can fall to the lot of human nature, and must be among the most apt predispositions to genuine felicity both here and hereafter. * * * *

I have just received the strongest possible invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Harford, to Blaise Castle, the last week of this month. I am sincerely obliged to them; but they can little imagine how incapable I am of such an expedition. While it pleases God to keep me as I am, the thing would be impossible. Still, I have unspeakable reason to be thankful for being so much better. Poor Miss Fergusson's state would withhold me, if I had not a yet stronger fetter on me.

June 23, 1829.

Miss Fergusson does not grow decidedly better; but she is, on the whole, much easier than she was three months ago. I have my own personal troubles, more than in spring. But God knows best what is good for me, and I feel that I know

nothing. Besides, never yet have I failed to receive some kind of relief, when I dreaded being borne down. In fact, it is worth being somewhat oppressed, to have even the smallest sense of inward relief; if, only, it be enough to prove its authenticity.

Friday, June 26, 1829.

I have felt no pleasure in Mr. ——'s suggestion, except as it is an evidence of his own kindly feeling to an old friend. As to the matter itself, it is, on every account, out of the question. Were I in ever such tolerable health, I could not think, for a moment, of undertaking that of which I know myself to be utterly incapable. The exact recollection of matters long gone by, is no talent of mine: and, accordingly, I look back upon the events of those times, as on objects which distance has made indistinct and obscure, and of which one sees little more than, as it were, a shadow. Besides, after the suppression of the Rebellion, were my memory ever so good, I should have little to recollect; for I was obliged, from nervous indisposition, to leave Ireland in the month of August 1799; and I did not return until all was over, and Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh going (with Mr. Pitt) out of office. So that, in fact, my knowledge was confined to the mere period of the Rebellion. And though I was well acquainted with the spirit and intention which actuated Lord Castlereagh at that time (and, I may truly say, all the persons in power), yet the evidence I could bear would be limited to my

own honest impressions; for, of the detail of measures or exigencies, I could, from memory, state nothing.

In addition to all this, no one knows better than yourself how entirely my thoughts have been moving in a different direction. And you can conceive how impossible it would be, after so many years, after so much weak health, and (were that the only hindrance) at my time of life, to take up a new course of study, and engage in a labour, to which (I most unfeignedly declare) at no time of life should I have been at all adequate. I have considered my powers of mind to have been, at all times, exceedingly limited; and never, on any reckoning, competent to a continued and systematized composition.

Lord Camden's wish* is a very natural one;

* The following letter, from Lord Castlereagh, will shew that, at an earlier period, the wish thus expressed on the part of Lord Camden had been urged on Mr. Knox by one still more capable of estimating his abilities, and better entitled to call forth his exertions. The letter, itself, will be interesting. It is one of a few, from the same writer, which have been preserved by Mr. Knox. Of Mr. Knox's numerous letters to his distinguished friend, I regret that not one has been yet recovered.—ED.

MY DEAR KNOX,

London, 30th March, 1811.

I SUPPOSE it is because I have no defence to offer, that your reproaches will not allow me to defer, even for a day, thanking you for your letter. And yet, I do assure you, that although I have no case, externally, to acquit me, I have never ceased, one moment, to feel towards you the warmest and most sincere regard.

The description you give of Dr. Miller's conversion is very gratifying to me. It is, I trust, the harbinger of that light which will yet dispel the unwholesome mists that overhang the Union. I wish it were possible for him to revise, before publication, the introductory chapter. The demons of the present day are at work to make those who carried the Union odious; as, first, having cruelly oppressed, and then sold, their country. The world's forgetfulness of the events which are a few years gone by, enables them to

and, in every view, he is entitled to entertain it. And I am confident that no persons, who were ever actors in such circumstances, had a better right to challenge the severest investigation of conduct, than all the statesmen of that distressing time, in their efforts for the welfare of Ireland and the security of the empire.

Alas! I am obliged to tell you that my nervous indisposition has returned on me with such severity,

mislead numbers. I don't know whether the moment is yet come for giving to the empire a temperate history of both those great events (I mean the Rebellion and the Union), stripped of the virulence which characterizes Musgrave and Daigman on one side, and Plowden and Barrington on the other. Such a work would accelerate all the good effects of the measure; and would perpetuate the literary fame of the individual who executed it. I wish you would turn this suggestion in your mind. I know no person so equal to it as yourself. You have been not only the eye-witness of both transactions, but have reflected deeply, and written ably, on them in their progress. You were, besides, in close habits of confidence with the surviving actors in both those events. The private papers, the official correspondence—in short, all those sources which the future historian will look for in vain, would be opened to you without reserve. My own stock is great. Lord Camden and Lord Cornwallis, Cooke, and other friends, could supply ample materials. And the latter would, I have no doubt, both animate and assist you in your labours. Such a work is essential to the public interest: I had almost said, to the public safety. And I really think it would come with great advantage before the world in your name, as you are known to be incapable of stating what you do not believe to be true; whilst the confidential relations in which you stood towards those in government, at that period, must have afforded you an opportunity of knowing more than any of those who have professed to inform, but who have, in fact, deceived, the nation, upon the true spirit and character of that interesting epoch in the history of Ireland. The perversion of truth and the party-colouring which so obviously belong to every publication hitherto given to the public, would furnish the intelligible motive for a candid exposition. Your sentiments upon the religious branch of the subject (I mean the sectarian politics of the country) singularly qualify you to write, not only impartially, but, to speak prospectively, the language of peace and conciliation to all. It is a great work: but it is worthy of your exertions. I need not add, how truly happy I should be to aid you with any lights I possess. And if you will, when engaged in it, pass occasionally, as you used to do, a few weeks in my family (an invitation in which Lady C. most warmly

as to make me very apprehensive of what I may have to endure for perhaps months to come. It has not, however, attacked me exactly as it did at first; but more in the way in which I was affected during the last summer; that is, as if the stomach were, sensibly, the source of distressing symptoms. And, therefore, though my feelings must be painful while the pressure of the malady continues, yet I trust it may please God to keep my state tolerable on the whole; and to permit me to have intervals

joins), I think we should, by conversing together, be able to recal those impressions which have become indistinct from lapse of time. I feel confident that the intentions of government for the public good, at that time, will bear the strictest scrutiny. There is nothing in the subsequent history of the individual actors that can throw a shade of mercenary motives around them. For myself, I can, at least, state, that neither in my own person, nor in that of any of my family, do I, at this moment, enjoy any favours from the crown, conferred subsequent to my being first employed in the public service in 1798: neither honorary, nor pecuniary. I believe their measures, when fairly explained, will stand equally the test of criticism; and that they may be shewn to have combined humanity with vigour of administration, when they had to watch over the preservation of the state; whilst, in the conduct of the Union, they pursued honestly the interests of Ireland, yielding not more to private interests than was requisite to disarm so mighty a change of any convulsive character.

If Defoe's "History of the Scottish Union" remains an interesting feature in every library, narrating, as it does, calmly, transactions comparatively of such small import, how much would a temperate history of Ireland for the last twenty years attract the notice of mankind, both now and hereafter! You have an instance in Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont. It is read here with avidity; defective as it is, as a comprehensive work.

Ponder over, my dear Knox, what I have said. Don't take counsel from your nerves, but your principles, in weighing the suggestions; and let me hear the result.

Your Irish priest has said, in a few words, every thing I have felt upon sectarian regulations. The insensible operation of power is the only resource to manage heterogeneous masses. See what it has done in the Synod of Ulster; and judge what salutary influence it would have on Catholic minds, more prone to bend to authority than the Presbyterians.

Yours, my dear Knox, ever very sincerely,

C.

of comparative quiet of frame, and, I would humbly hope, still more of mind. It is a case which must be left wholly in the hands of God; for medical skill can do absolutely nothing. I am not sure that I ever experienced the least abatement, even from the prescriptions of Dr. Cheyne; but I, nevertheless, liked greatly to receive his kind visits: and his cheering words were often a cordial, and in some degree an anodyne, in times of discomfort and depression.

I fear I could not have written this letter if topics had not pressed upon me; for I certainly am not just now able to excogitate, without sensible inconvenience. Therefore, what it may be in my power to do, even in the way of letter-writing, while this weakness remains upon me, I cannot tell. But what I can do, I am not likely to neglect, for my heart and thoughts are ever with you and —.

Monday, June 29, 1829.

I mentioned in my last that my nervousness had, in some degree, returned. I am obliged to say that I cannot deem myself better since I wrote; but I am more satisfied than I was then, that my nervous feelings are of a somewhat different kind from what they were about this time twelvemonth. It seems as if I had now much more of weakness than of agitation; and therefore my state is, on the whole, far less distressing. My almost habitual sensations are morbid, as well as nervous; less, perhaps, the latter, than the former. The most painful circumstance is, that I am liable to be made worse, perhaps for hours, by any exertion of

thought. I thank God I can think ; but I must let my thoughts take their own direction : and I must acknowledge that I feel no great inconvenience from doing so ; for I trust it is through the Divine mercy that my mind has got even the degree of tendency which it possesses toward those subjects which are inexhaustible, and those objects which are infinite. I hope that I have learned something of the value of religion by means of my indisposition. But I feel as if it were more in speculation than in practice. I often think that if our holy religion were as much substantiated in my heart as it is completely satisfactory to my understanding, and inexpressibly interesting to all my mental faculties, I should enjoy a serenity and sunshine of the breast which nothing of ordinary vicissitude could becloud. I say, of ordinary vicissitude ; for, with all my indifferent health, I have really suffered so little, that I have as yet little idea, if any, of what bodily sufferings are. This is a thought which sometimes comes awfully across my mind ; but I consider that the future is not my concern. How admirably tranquillizing is that oracle, “ Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you ! ”

Monday, July 6, 1829.

I am obliged still to complain of myself, feeling as yet no change for the better. I have, however, great reason to be thankful that my nervousness is of a quiet kind, and that it does not disturb my sleep. But it oppresses me a good deal, and I fear will oblige me this day to write a short letter.

* * * * I perfectly agree with you in your sound and sober view of our best course, subject as we are to so many vicissitudes both in our mental and corporeal frame. But though I have great need of acting by the rule which you so truly lay down, at the moment of my writing to you I meant rather to estimate the comfort I might feel were my heart as much impressed as I could wish it to be, than to complain of discomfort actually felt. I have, I assure you, desired to keep my mind in the very kind of state which you so justly deem our wisest course; but I peculiarly referred to the very cheerful and happy apprehensions which I have been led to form of God in Himself, of incarnate Godhead, and of the whole design of the Gospel dispensation. I would humbly hope that I could not have conceived such satisfactory views, except through the Divine guidance. And it seems to me that all I want is to feel them yet more deeply;—to have them vitally established in my mind and heart—in order to secure to me all that can be looked for, as to mental happiness on this side heaven.

When I speak thus, it might be thought that I was too desirous of high-raised sensations. But I think it is not so. I value deep principle much more than elevated feeling. I have no wish for any frame of mind which is liable to fluctuation, or which implies a mixture of passion with affection. I far prefer stability to excitement. I wish for nothing more than the former; I have no degree of desire for the latter. In fact, there is a passage in Whichcote (which, I believe, I have

pointed out to you formerly), that describes what I take to be the happiest state of mind on this earth. “Man,” says he, “is not at all settled or confirmed in religion, until his religion is the self-same thing with the reason of his mind; that, when he thinks he speaks reason, he speaks religion; or, when he speaks religiously, he speaks reasonably; and his religion and reason are mingled together; they pass into one principle; they are no more two, but one: just as the light in the air makes one illuminated sphere, so reason and religion, in the subject, are one principle.” I do not mean that this is a full description; it merely states a result of rooted and grounded religion: but such a result as bespeaks religious maturity, and implies settled mental felicity; which can only be enjoyed in proportion as that union which Whichcote speaks of is realized in the mind.

But how little can we do for ourselves in this pursuit! and therefore I perfectly adopt your remark, that we ought to be “thankful when conjunctures arise that bring our hearts into closer and livelier intercourse with our heavenly Father.” I have long been assured that this is the great purpose of chastisement. And I also believe that in the “closer and livelier intercourse” (thus, as it were, necessitated by something like mechanical pressure) the mind learns lessons by which it becomes more enlightened with Divine truth, than, perhaps, in the nature of things it could be, in any other circumstances. And, therefore, you have found increased interest in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Adieu! my dear ———. When I began, I

doubted my power of so far filling my paper. But, in writing to you, my heart is in my work; and, therefore, there is as little exertion as there could be in almost any possible exercise of mind.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO J. S. HARFORD, ESQ.

MY DEAR MR. HARFORD,

Dublin, Dawson Street,
June 13, 1829.

I NEED not give you any assurance how deeply I feel the kindness of your and Mrs. Harford's most friendly requisition. But, if you could form an idea of my state of health during the greater part of the last year, and of the slowness with which I am still emerging, you would know that my availing myself of the peculiar attractiveness of your invitation, kind as it is in you and Mrs. Harford, and special as it promises to be in so many concurrent gratifications, is, notwithstanding, utterly beyond my present powers. I think you will the less wonder at this, when I tell you that I have, this day, taken my first short walk for, I believe, eight months. And, considering how ill I have been, and how greatly I feared, during the spring and summer of last year, that I might never be better, I am at this time, I trust, sincerely grateful to the goodness of Providence, but still full of caution lest I should impede my progress toward more comfortable health by any premature exertion. I trust you will feel the force of this ne-

cessitated apology; and I could wish to express, still more strongly, my cordial sense of all you say to induce me to obey your summons. But I cannot doubt that Mrs. Harford and yourself will give me credit for my unfeigned gratitude, and for every earnest wish that the heart can form, for her best happiness and yours. * * * *

I trust matters will go on well with my two most dear friends, Mrs. La Touche and ——. I receive very cheering letters from them; and I would fain hope they will reap good effects from the solace and exhilaration which newness of scene and endearment of friends are affording them. None on earth, I am sure, know how to value friendship better than they, or are more capable of enjoying it. For my own part, I can say that I regard my intimacy with them as one of the greatest earthly blessings which the kindness of Providence has conferred on me. Among many I have received, there is but one other I can compare with it; and I have the comfort of thinking that neither is merely earthly. I humbly hope both the one and the other have been allotted to me with a view to my eternal, not less (perhaps far more) than to my temporal interest.

I have not forgotten a desire of yours, that I should more fully explain to you the distinction which I believed to have been in St. Paul's mind, in using the words ἐμάθον and μεμύνημαι. And I hope, at no distant period, to offer to your consideration some thoughts upon this subject. The truth is, that my mind is generally full of thought on the yet unsettled meanings and unsuspected depths of

the New Testament. Jonathan Edwards says, "It is an argument with me that the world is not yet very near its end, that the Church has made no greater progress in understanding the mysteries of the Scriptures." And again, "It seems to me to be evident that the Church is not, as yet, arrived to that perfection in understanding the Scripture, which we can imagine is the highest that God ever intended the Church should come to." I confess to you, that, except I were similarly persuaded, I should tremble for Christianity in these strange times; in which men are growing, in their conceit, so much more learned than they ever imagined themselves before. If, therefore, it could not be shewn that the Gospel Revelation outshines all human learning, even on its own grounds, and even as tried by human rules—that is, on the soundest principles of philosophy,—I should dread what may be impending. But, persuaded as I am, that Christianity, rightly understood, will carry it above every thing to every thinking mind, I look forward with confidence, be the rising times what they may.

But I must conclude, or lose the hour of the early mail. Therefore, receive my most cordial expressions of regard and gratitude to Mrs. Harford and yourself; and believe me

Ever most sincerely and affectionately

Hers and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Wednesday, July 22d, 1829.

* * * I am glad of what you say respecting ———. If she should become less doctrinal, her religion would, I conceive, be more deeply devotional; because she would, then, have only the one subject of mental solicitude. We are limited beings; and must, of necessity, exercise our minds less upon one thing, in proportion as we distribute our inward powers upon different objects. And, besides, it is scarcely possible that we can be as concentrated, in our pursuit of what is strictly spiritual, when we think that it is not the one thing needful; but belongs rather to the health and well-being, than to the life and being, of the true Christian. To trust in our blessed Saviour, is our truest wisdom, and our unspeakable duty; but how to trust in him? I do not know that we are warranted, any where in the New Testament, to trust in him, directly and simply, for everlasting salvation. He has come to save us; but in his own way; that is, by communicated grace, and by ensuring our success when we ask for grace. We are to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and grace to help us in time of need.” It is here, alone, that genuine and undelusive trust can be exercised. And it is in this course alone that we can secure to ourselves the substantial blessings of the everlasting Gospel.

What a wonderful fact it is, that, from the first century to the days of the schoolmen, no

books whatever, resembling modern doctrinal books, were known among Christians. It was, in fact, not possible : for their view of justification was quite another thing ; namely, the being made, inwardly and practically, righteous, through the transmutative influences of the grace of Christ.

Aug. 7, 1829.

I doubt whether persons of honest discernment, among the Wesleyan Methodists, do not, more and more, anticipate the decadence of that form.

But I suspect this apprehension is not confined to them. I fancy the whole sectarian body is conceived, by impartial observers among themselves, to be moving into a comparative aphelion. "A sect," says Mrs. Barbauld, "is never stationary, as it depends on passions and opinions : though it often attains excellence (? ?), it never rests in it, but is always in danger of one extreme or the other." This, then, being the fact, and now, probably, about to have a fresh and very remarkable exemplification, I only wish that those whose concern it is, could make a due estimate of the providential standard afforded in our inestimable Liturgy. Without it, a Whitfield and a Wesley never could have risen ; and its due appreciation can alone secure us, in a reasonable view, from the possible consequences of sectarian vacillation. Alas ! it is poorly understood ; and therefore cannot, in the mean time, accomplish all its just purposes. But, if it be only permitted to remain, without disturbing its structure, or unlocking its sacred arch, it will remain at once the *decus* and the *tutamen* of professional and (may I not say ?)

of vital Christianity : for, soberly, I cannot consider the model of inward and effective religion, which our services continually place before us, as the work of man. “What the gifts of the Spirit may, in every age of the Church, have done,” says the liberal Doddridge, “by operations of this kind” —that is, by raising minds above their human level—“we know not.”—*Dissertation on Inspiration*. I think it may be shewn, by the strongest marks, that if ever this was the case, it was in the first drawing up of our prayers by St. Gregory, and in the no less wonderful remodification of them at our own Reformation ; and, I am ready to add, at our long subsequent revision.

Aug. 18, 1829.

I have been lately reading some of St. Augustin with my friend Spedding ; and, though I knew the general fact of his understanding the term justification, in a moral sense, I have been more than ever struck with the decided, unvarying manner in which he does so ; evidently implying that, in that sense, the word was universally understood, and that there neither was, nor had been, a shadow of controversy upon the point. Thus, when he says of the Jews, that “*de suis meritis præfidentes, spreverunt esse filii Promissionis, hoc est, filii gratiæ, filii misericordiæ, ut qui gloriatur, in Domino gloriatur, credens in Eum qui justificat impium,*” he immediately adds, “*hoc est, qui ex impio facit pium.*” Again, he thus explains the spirit of adoption, as opposed to the spirit of bondage : “*Id est, ut fides in nobis sit, quæ per dilec-*

tionem operatur; non tam timendo pœnam, quam amando justitiam. Tamen, quia non fit anima justa, nisi participatione melioris, qui justificat impium (quid enim habet, quod non accepit) non debet, sibi tribuendo quod Dei est, ita gloriari tanquam non acceperit." Again, "Illa justitia Dei commendatur, in eo quod dicitur, 'Ignorantes Dei justitiam;' quâ nos ex ejus gratiâ justi simus, cum juste vivimus." Once more: "Novit anima (the renovated mind) Deo se debere quòd justificata est ad facienda bona opera; et, ideò, in illo, non in se, laudari amat."

I think you will see, even from these few passages, which I find within the compass of a few pages, how unsuspicious St. Augustin was of St. Paul's doctrine being otherwise understood than as he understands it; and, I confess, I can no more harbour a doubt than he did, of its being the very doctrine of St. Paul, or that it will one day be universally owned as such. Then, and not till then, will there be an end of antinomianism. Then, and not before, will Christians become as men of one mind in a house, and infidels will be silenced by the self-evidence of eternal truth, manifesting itself in the Gospel with the same conclusiveness as in the ways of Providence, and in the works of creation.

I cannot yet say that I improve. I thought myself absolutely growing worse last week. And I, sometimes, had fears that I should, at length, be disabled from either writing, reading, or thinking. But, I thank God, these fears are a good deal dispelled; though I must still suffer.

August 28th, 1829.

I am sorry to say that my head is, at present, a good deal affecting me. In some respects, I am inclined to think myself not losing ground ; but, in others, I suffer rather more than I did several months ago. In fact, I could then exercise my mind in a way I am afraid to do now. My nervous weakness is very great indeed ; but, notwithstanding, I seem to have a greater power of keeping myself quiet, than I have had in former instances of increased indisposition. I also not only get rest at night, but I have some reason to conclude that my complaints, at present, imply a sleepy tendency, as has been the case with me when more than usually bilious.

In reading the twenty-third chapter of St. Luke, a day or two ago, I was struck with the poetical character which marks our Lord's words addressed to the women who followed him to his crucifixion. It would not be easy to define precisely the kind of stanza to which the whole corresponds ; but it appears to me, that there is, first, a couplet addressed to the women ; then a line, introducing the prophetic part (consisting of two couplets ; the first referring to the peculiar distress of the women ; the second, to the general distress of all). Last comes a concluding couplet, which forms as forcible and pertinent a close as could be conceived ; referring at once to himself, and to the victims of the destined calamity. Altogether, it strikes me as a very powerful and finished composition ; undeniably Hebraic in its structure ; and as suitable to the occasion, in its matter, as was possible. The

most remarkable circumstance is, that, at such a time, our Lord should employ the very same style that he employed in his sermon on the mount; for you'll particularly observe, in this short discourse, the selfsame kind of full close to a regular stanza, which so oftens occurs on the former occasion. No doubt, this poetical turn of expression so often is found in the Old Testament, as to make our Lord's use of it, even on that great occasion, perfectly natural. But it does not the less shew how entirely he was master of himself. And, altogether, as it is recorded, and, I may add, marked impressively, as it is (like so many of his other discourses) with gracefulness and symmetry, it stands high among those exquisite peculiarities, which (inimitable as they are) give intuitive evidence of their Divine authenticity.

I was not sure I could have written three sentences. But the subject engaged me; and I could not but finish what I had to say.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

Sept. 11, 1829.

I THANK you for every thing you sent me by the post, and by the coachman: but I must be very brief in replying, as my head is in a poor state, and I have little prospect of its being better. God may be pleased in his goodness to grant me some amendment; but man can do nothing for me, except pray for me.

I feel great pleasure in the Christian candour of Mrs. —. It is a comfortable thing to have a genuine Christian to deal with: indeed, I must add, who has a sound understanding; for the want of this latter may, even in a good person, produce effects which becloud the brightness of sincere religion.

My dear —, pray to God for relief to me. I do not mean, absolutely and positively for bodily relief; but for such communications of supporting grace, as may enable me to submit, without a murmur, to the will (I should rather say the wisdom and goodness) of God. If he would deepen the sense of religion in me; if he would bless me with more of the spirit of prayer; with more of the vital knowledge of “the only true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent;” with felt and habitual access of the heart to the Father and to the Son; with the blessed power of taking refuge in God from all troubles; and of looking beyond the present light affliction, which is but for a moment, to a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, I trust I should be willing to leave every thing else to his unerring disposal.

I request my dear Mrs. La Touche's prayers; and tell my kind and good Mrs. —, that I request her and her good husband's prayers also. You see what I wish to be the main subject of them.

Ever my dear Mrs. La Touche's and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P.S. It would be a deep consolation,—nay, a rich compensation to me, if I could hope that all this was intended to deepen true religion in my heart, and to bring me into true and substantial possession of the life of God in the soul: and, I ought to add, into a spiritual and experimental knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. I have long felt my deficiency in that respect.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

September 18, 1829.

——— and yourself will like to know how I go on. Dr. Cheyne called on me, with his accustomed goodness, yesterday, and gave me every possible assurance that my fears about myself were unfounded, and that I suffered nothing but what such cases continually exemplified. I had had but a middling night, and was very apprehensive of a still worse one: but the hope he gave me was verified to the letter, as God was pleased to give me quiet sleep, without, I believe, a quarter of an hour's interruption at any time through the night. Thus, I thank God, I am a good deal relieved from my greatest terror; and, I trust, it is my sincere wish to commit myself to His unerring hands: nor could I admit a desire for better health, until He sees it consistent with my best interests. I believe I could not receive as deep instruction, or so suitable to my mental

frame, in any other school. As it is, I cannot doubt that He takes care of me, and, I would humbly trust, does support me.

Even my reason tells me that I probably could not learn the same lessons in any other way. Two lessons particularly, I trust, are in some measure taught me; namely, the need of continual influence from above, and, consequently, of that constant prayer which solicits it; and, also, the inconceivable excellence and value of religion, as brought before us in the everlasting Gospel. When we experimentally learn, in however low a degree, the resource which is found in the converse of the heart with God, and the independence, which may thus be obtained, on sublunary things and circumstances, it is surely a comfort of a kind infinitely above every other in this lower world.

The assurance of Divine Providence, in every thing, is also an inestimable support. I dare say you know the last four verses of the thirty-third chapter of Deuteronomy; I am apt to think this passage one of the very sublimest and most delightful in the Old Testament. The first couplet of the twenty-seventh verse is peculiarly noble.

Did you ever read John Newton's own narrative, in his letters to Dr., then Mr., Harris? You have the matter of them in Cecil's Life of him. But I regard the continued flow of his own letters, commencing with his earliest years, and going on to an advanced period of life, telling every thing simply in his own easy way, to be much more interesting: if you please, I'll send you the volume

of his works which contains it : when you have it, read a letter in Omicron's Letters, entitled "A Christian's Library."

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

Oct. 2, 1829.

I THANK you for your kind note, and am sincerely glad that you are able to give me such a favourable account of the Bishop's health, which, considering the unkindliness of the season, is every thing that could have been expected. As to myself, I cannot give my kind friend and you a comfortable statement. I have gained no ground since I wrote last; I rather think I have lost ground. It would give my kind friend and you little comfort to go into particulars, and would do no good to myself. In fact, nervous distresses can only be known by those who actually feel them.

It is the will of God; and if He, in his goodness, will enable me to submit to it with patience, I shall be satisfied and thankful. But it is the sad tendency of nervous diseases to weaken the mind in that very part of it, where, in a sound state, the chief consolation may be found.

I would willingly have said nothing of all this : but you kindly inquire, in your own name, and in

that of three other most cordially valued friends. What, therefore, can I do, but tell you and them the painful truth ?

It is curious what a difference there is between nervousness of the severest kind and real morbid melancholy. Of the latter, I believe, I have not a particle : yet the former brings sensations which, while they last, are too much of the same overwhelming nature. But, then, even while they last, they consciously arise from the state of the body ; and the mind feels it could be as cheerful as ever, were it not borne down by its diseased companion.

As I am, I greatly need the prayers of my friends ; for no earthly being can stand more in want than I do of the Divine mercy. I said it would answer little end to go into particulars ; but I may just as well mention, that my most distressing sensations are those of the head and stomach. But, be the particular symptoms what they may, it is that very case in which medicine has no effect, and medical skill avails nothing : I mean when it becomes in itself, as, I apprehend, is the case with me, a rooted and grounded disease.

You will give my love to the Bishop, and my kind remembrances to my other friends. Accept yourself, also, my sincere love,

And believe me your grateful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

P. S. — I, perhaps, ought to add, that if the sensations I have mentioned were merely corporeal, there would be nothing in them to try

patience; but the peculiar manner in which they bear down the mind is that which constitutes their singularly depressing character.*

* FROM THE REV. CHARLES FORSTER TO MR. KNOX.

MY DEAR MR. KNOX,

Leamington, Warwick,
Oct. 12, 1829.

YOUR letter of the 2d inst. has been, much and deeply, in the Bishop's thoughts and mine. The case which it describes is as clearly one of bodily malady as words could represent. And this was the independent, but unanimous judgment of the Bishop, his brother, our friend John Jebb, and myself. But, though plainly originating in disease of the stomach and nerves, the mental symptoms you complain of are not the less painful and distressing. A case of this nature is, however, attended with one great compensation; the more closely the symptoms are scrutinised, the less real they must appear.

In saying this, I am far from meaning to convey the idea that the moral may not enter into and augment the corporeal depression. But the inference which we would draw from this, is very different from that which might be likely to occur to your own mind. Under bodily weakness a strong man may benefit by the assistance of a child; and the analogy has its application in higher concerns. Suffer me, then, to remind you, that in medicine nothing is more common than for the same symptoms to be produced by directly opposite causes: and that, what is true in medicine may hold equally true in morals. In your case, it is not merely my poor opinion, but the settled conviction of our dear friend (your fellow-sufferer in the body, and therefore the better judge of your case), that what there is of mental in your present suffering springs mainly from a cause which brought suffering to St. Paul himself. A heart and conscience habitually conversant with the living, though unseen, realities of the Gospel, will naturally acquire a tenderness, to which less advanced proficients may be comparatively strangers. And, where the body is affected, I can conceive this moral tenderness (in itself an inestimable blessing) to become a source of even exquisite pain.

But here comes the heart-comforting reflection, that while the spirits of his faithful servants may be lying low under such afflicting depressions of body and mind, then it is that our gracious God and Father may be looking down upon them with peculiar love and care. The Bishop bids me remind you, as a source of present relief to yourself, of a letter in your correspondence with the venerable John Wesley, in reply to one from you laying heavy things to your own charge. In that letter Mr. Wesley tells you that you charge yourself with things which God has not laid to your charge. On this sentence your dear friend exhorts you to think now, and be comforted.

In touching even thus far on what you picture to yourself as mental and

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO THE REV.
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

Oct. 14, 1829.

I CAN only write you a line in reply to your kind note; and I do so in order explicitly to declare that the utmost I ever intentionally said was, that I lamented my own deficiency in the spiritual life;

moral in your case, I am satisfied as of my existence, my revered and honoured friend, that I am yielding to your tenderness of conscience in a degree quite disproportionate to the true state of things. It is the Bishop's deep-grounded persuasion, no less than mine, that ninety-nine parts in the hundred of what you at present feel and suffer, is purely physical; and is to be accounted for, most satisfactorily, however painfully, by the change which it seemed good to the Giver of all good should, for some time past, take place in your manner of being.

Perhaps it may not be now a discomfort to you to learn, that for years it had been your friend's heartfelt apprehension and mine, that the transition implied in the removal of your late excellent friend must, in the nature of things, prove to you most severely trying. Not, assuredly, in the form of regret at the providential disposal, but from the simple fact of its throwing you, after many years of varied and delightful social intercourse, into comparative solitude, and upon your own resources, at a period when, from weakened health, those resources could be no longer available as they had formerly been. The mere change of circumstances might suffice to try a frame of iron; how, then, could it fail to try, and try keenly, a body and nerves so fragile as yours?

All things fairly considered, we feel that you have borne yourself well; and, by the Divine blessing, you will bear yourself still better. Notwithstanding the uncomfortable sensations you describe, we have had the gratification to hear from various friends, who have lately seen you, that you look and are in better health than you seem to be yourself aware of, and certainly than you possessed last year.

But all agree that you shut yourself up in a way that must be prejudicial to health, and nerves, and spirits. Without air, we vegetate rather than live. At Bellevue, I have seen you sit with your chamber-windows open; this is not likely to be the case in Dawson Street. And the misfortune is, that with the disuse, there arises more and more a disrelish of external air. Exercise, even carriage exercise, becomes then a burden: while, without air and exercise, the machine cannot long go on. I have seen this process too often, not to deprecate most earnestly your surren-

which, if stronger, I thought would more perfectly support me under my present trial. I might appeal to any man who visited me, whether I ever said more than this, and whether I did not resist those who would have pressed other views upon me, as strenuously as I would have done at any former moment of my life. Besides, I can most truly say, that I never had a thought of deeming my interior distresses as tinged with religious me-

dering yourself a victim to it. While under the dominion of the habit, you may suppose yourself unequal to any fresh effort; but the effort once made, the spell on the imagination will be broken, and you will find that you can do elsewhere as you have been used to do at Bellevûe. Think only of the example of the Bishop; when in health and strength, he used to fear being in a close carriage, with so much as part of one window down; now, in his delicate state, he traverses the country fearlessly, in all seasons and weathers, in an open carriage. And to this change, under Providence, may chiefly be ascribed his recovery and improvement.

An excursion to England (let not the word startle you) would, I am convinced, prove a better restorative than all the prescriptions of Dr. Cheyne. The case which medicine cannot reach is exactly the case for such an experiment. Crossing to Bristol, you would find friends rejoiced to welcome you at your landing-place. Mrs. H. More, at Clifton; the Stocks and Harfords, at Henbury. Once across the channel, you might measure your progress by your strength. And, while benefiting your health, you might gratify and do good to many affectionate friends.

There is one point on which I have for some time wished to put you on your guard; and your last confidential note gives me the opportunity.

It is this;—when labouring under nervous depression, be cautious to whom you communicate your uncomfortable physical feelings. To our knowledge, they have been misrepresented, as though they arose from erroneousness in your views of Christianity.

More than a year ago, excellent ——— apprised us of a report which had been industriously circulated, that Mr. Knox was labouring under a kind of religious despondency, owing to the unsoundness of his system, which (to use their phraseology) left him without a Saviour. ——— at once repelled the insinuation; and flew to us for authority to contradict it. This was instantly given; and we accounted for the misrepresentation very much in the tenour of your last letter.

With the Bishop's best love,

Ever yours most affectionately,

C. FORSTER.

lancholy. I have regarded my case, and do regard it, merely as a nervous indisposition ; and nothing has, first or last, been further from my thoughts than the supposition of religious error having the smallest share in it. At this moment, I must declare that I know not how I could understand our Redeemer's Divine discourses, and the writings of his Apostles, otherwise than I have done, and do : and, in my own pursuit of the religion of the heart, I am conscious of no questionable character in the blessing I have been looking for, which was to make me doubt whether I have not been following a "cunningly devised fable." On the contrary, I always thought that my sole defect lay in not more fully possessing the blessedness which I feebly, but sincerely, and from the fullest conviction, was pursuing.

But I can only add one observation : they ought to know that no religious views whatever are proof against nervous obscurcation. On this point, I refer to the chapter of Doddridge's Rise and Progress, in a Christian walking in darkness. But, I must say, that I do not consider this to be my case ; for, I trust, I sensibly love religion ; and have had, I hope, support from time to time, tending to shew me that I had no reason to suspect myself of having been in a wrong way. I have written in the greatest haste, and under pressure of disease.

But I am ever my kind Friend's and yours,

With every wish of heart,

ALEX. KNOX.

P. S.—I am obliged to say I am not gaining

ground: in short, just now I think myself very unwell.

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ. TO THE REV.
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

Oct. 15, 1829.

I WRITE a few lines to-day, fearing that, from my great haste, I might not, yesterday, have conveyed my exact meaning; as I perceive by your most kind note received yesterday, I did not do in the note I previously wrote to you.

I see I must have too vaguely stated the nature of the mental part of my malady. I did not mean to describe any thing but the necessary effects of such derangement of the nervous system as I labour under, on the intellectual part of our nature. My mental discomforts are not such as to awaken religious terrors,—except that of my nervous distresses rising above patient endurance. I believe I may truly say, that this is my sole religious uneasiness: and this I feel only in times of increased suffering. I hope, in other respects, my mind possesses a degree of habitual peace, which has been my support during my indisposition, under the persuasion that it could come only from the Fountain of mercies. Doubtless, this peace has become sometimes less sensible, when I have suffered under a kind of mental apathy; which, I presume, must ever be likely to occur in such a state of nervous disease as mine. But these seasons, I thank God, do not last long;

and the relief from them often, I would dare to say, compensates for the temporary obscuration.

In fact, I would fain think that I never had less reason to question the safety of the way in which I have been led, than during this indisposition. The movements within, respecting our religious progress, form a very delicate subject; and I am afraid to speak of them, lest I should make too self-flattering an estimate. But this I will venture to say, that my depressions are, strictly, those of disease; and that real mental distress, of a religious nature, has no share in the matter. I trust there is not a particle of religious melancholy in the whole course of my painful feelings.

“You never can be happy,” says one to me, “while you trust for comfort to frame and feelings.” “Well, then,” say I, “such is my nature, that I can trust, for evidence, to nothing else than that which you so denominate.” I am not, I must add, subject to misgivings of conscience, as when those letters were passing between John Wesley and me. I hope and trust my conscience is not disturbed. If I spoke of religious uneasiness, I meant to speak only of such scruples about particular things (scarcely intelligible to any but myself) as, in all severe nervous cases, in one form or other, make a part of the disease. On the whole, while I humbly hope I have a basis of comfort which I would not want for ten thousand worlds, and while I trust in the Divine grace, that I have a Saviour at whose feet I wish to sit, and whose yoke and burden I desire sincerely, if I knew myself, to bear, I wish to leave myself,

unreservedly, in the hands of God ; who, after all, has blessed me with a certain cheerfulness of mind, that has never yet been borne down, except by transient apprehensions of what my disease might, at length, become ; but, still, so transient have these been, as seldom, if ever, to subject me to an entire gloomy day.

I hope I have now spoken clearly and explicitly ; and that my dear friend and yourself will both perceive how far I have been mistaken.

Ever his and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P.S.—No one but a nervous person can understand what nervous feelings of the severer kind amount to ; and, therefore, nervous sufferers must be ever liable to be misunderstood.*

* FROM THE REV. CHARLES FORSTER TO ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ.

Leamington, Warwick,
Oct. 19, 1829.

MY DEAR MR. KNOX,

I HAVE, this moment, received your second valued favour : for both, accept the cordial thanks of two friends, who yield to none living in appreciation of you as a Christian, and in love for you as a man.

To the Bishop and me, your explanations, although most conclusive, are (so far as our satisfaction is concerned) wholly unnecessary ; for, in good truth, the idea of any thing in your case beyond mere nervous affection, never, for one moment, presented itself to our minds. But the nerves are such sad task-masters, when once they lay violent hands on the constitution, that we could not be sure whether, or how far, you might not be prevented, by nervous obscurations, from doing by yourself, at all moments, the justice which we would always do by you. From this undefined imagination arose any reference whatever in my letter, to your case, in a moral aspect.

But the sentiments recorded in your two notes are of great consequence, as safeguards against mistake, misrepresentation, and, it may be feared, in some quarters, too willing aspersions on the part of others : for, certain it is, you had spoken with some, who could not, or would not, understand you. From what we have heard incidentally, I have little doubt that, when

A PRAYER, WRITTEN PROBABLY ABOUT THIS PERIOD.

MERCIFUL and gracious God! help me in this my great distress; and, above all, help me by deepening thy holy religion in my heart. Oh! for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, grant me this most necessary blessing in the way thou seest good. I would fain say, with my whole soul, deepen thy holy religion in me, and enable me more than ever to take refuge in Thee from the present stormy wind and tempest. I entreat Thee, hear this petition, and answer it in the way Thou judgest best.

At this time I greatly need some relief. Man cannot aid me; Thou alone canst. Thou seest I am oppressed; my God, undertake for me and help me. But, above every thing, I still say, deepen thy blessed religion in me; deepen faith in me, and strengthen that which is weak, and supply that which is wanting in my soul. Oh! preserve me, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, from extremes of temptation, nor suffer me to be tempted above what Thou wilt enable me to bear. I humbly implore this infinite mercy at thy hands.

Give me opportune relief, as Thou in thy wis-

beyond the reach of contradiction, those would be found in readiness who would not scruple to maintain, what they had previously circulated, that Mr. Knox had lived to repent and deplore his mistaken views of Christianity. To do this, I thank God, you have completely put out of their power; or, if the attempt were to be made, it would turn to their shame.

Adieu, my dear Mr. Knox,

Ever most affectionately yours,

CHARLES FORSTER.

dom and mercy shall see most fit; but, in this extremity, forsake me not, and make my present trial the means of endearing thy holy religion to my heart, and of uniting me more closely to Thee, O Father! and to Thee, O Incarnate Saviour! than ever yet I have been. Oh! grant me this inestimable blessing. And do thou, O God, for Christ's sake, enable me to pray to Thee, to trust in Thee, and to commit myself to Thee!

Lord! thou seest I am greatly oppressed. Again I say, if it be thy blessed will, grant me some alleviation of my trial; and, for Christ's sake, preserve me from more than I shall be able to bear. Oh, suffer not my hope to perish; nor let thy mercy seem to forsake me! And again I say, deepen thy blessed religion in my heart; and when I cry to Thee, cast me not off, nor make, I entreat Thee, as though Thou heardest not.

I acknowledge, and humbly thank Thee for, thy mercies hitherto. Oh, continue them! And again I say, for I cannot say it too often, deepen the life of grace, and the power of religion, in my heart. Thou seest how much I need this. Oh, grant me this blessing, and I will praise Thee while I have a being! Oh, teach me by thy blessed Spirit, and completely subdue my mind and heart to thyself.

Oh! hear and answer these petitions, in thy condescending goodness, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour.

FROM ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ., TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

November 9, 1829.

You will be sorry to know that my eye is once more disabled; and, I fear, more than in any of the transient attacks which I have had at different times, during the last and present year. But in this I may be mistaken. You may suppose, however, that it depresses me not a little. Should it continue in its present weakness, I trust God will support me, and make it the means of promoting still more effectually what, I trust, is the merciful object of my present trials.

You kindly desire me to tell you about Miss Fergusson. I am sorry to say that her state for the last fortnight does not promise comfortably for the winter. She has returns of her pains, which are very distressing; I almost fear I may say alarming.

I somehow or other cannot muster courage to go into that subject;* at least I fear so. And, indeed, I fear also that you are making more account than some of them, at least, may deserve. I scarcely know how to describe any of them with precision, except the last. Besides, the first and second were not very distinguishable; the one as well as the other, being a kind of momentary specimen of the happiness afforded by a subdued

* This is in answer to the expressed desire of the friend to whom it is addressed, who wished to possess in Mr. Knox's own words, an exact record of the occurrences which he had before communicated orally.

and spiritual frame of mind and heart; the latter had, perhaps, more in it of Evangelical spirituality.

The third was a view of the moral excellence of the Christian religion; the particulars of which I cannot recall; and I retain only a feeling of the brightness and beauty of the mental view, and of the satisfaction which it gave me during its short continuance. The fourth I have laid most stress upon, because, in addition to an engaging sense of Deity—as of the one object of the heart—I had, also, in however slight a degree, a more conscious attraction to our blessed Saviour, as God incarnate, than I ever felt before. I humbly hope that there was nothing delusive in it.

With fear and trembling I mention these matters to you. And I thought it right to do the same (though with the same feeling) in a conversation yesterday with Mr. Edward Pennéfather and Mr. James Scott. They received what I said with candour and interest.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

November 14, 1829.

I THINK you would rather have a line from me, even of less pleasant matter, than be left to conjecture. My eye is not better; and (though, as you see, I can still write without difficulty) I am afraid to read a paragraph. The consequence is, that I feel my nervousness more painfully, being

left more to think about it. Though I possibly got cold in that same walk which I mentioned, I cannot doubt that my eye has now become connected with the general malady. How long it may please Providence to continue its present inability, I cannot tell.

I must not venture to say more; and I have said quite enough about myself. I will only add, that those little matters which I particularised, because you wished it, may possibly have contributed, through the mercy of God (I would humbly hope more than possibly), to support my mind in greater tranquillity than if they had been wanting. God grant that I may never feel this support to have been delusive! I cannot think it is. And, if it be genuine in its kind, in spite of discouragements, I am assuredly in the hands of Divine mercy. I believe I have remarked before, that my kind of malady has this advantage, that, in the space of a few minutes, there may be a change for the better.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO —.

MY DEAR —,

December 11, 1829.

* * *

I am sure you do not attach one particle more of importance to the doctrine of our Saviour's essential Divinity than belongs to it. I believe He is transcendently, in the moral system of this world, what our sun is in our solar system. And that, in fact, this world of ours was created

and prepared to be a proper scene for Him to exercise therein the Divine goodness and wisdom for the instruction of angels, and the beatification of all such on earth as should receive his yoke and submit to his dominion. I only lament that, while I have this conviction in my understanding, I do not feel the influence of this blessed Sun of Righteousness as, I hope, I wish to do in my mind and heart.

I thank God I do at present suffer less distress than I did some weeks ago; and I still get very comfortable rest. But I cannot admit the thought that my malady has yet begun really to abate. I, therefore, as I have often said, endeavour to leave myself in the hands of God; and continually implore that he will graciously support me while under his infallibly wise correction, and that He will make it conducive to my spiritual and everlasting good.

FROM THE SAME TO _____.

MY DEAR _____,

January 2, 1830.

* * * I wish to call your attention to a little matter in the way of Evangelical criticism, which has lately struck me. Strongly as I have been convinced that St. Paul could not have meant to speak of himself (as his feelings were when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans), in the seventh chapter; still, the concluding words coming after, "I thank God," &c. have often

puzzled me. But, lately, I have considered that, let the Apostle's intention in those words be what it might, he could not have used them with reference to his state after he had been "made free from the law of sin and death." The decisive proof is, that he uses the word *νοῦς*, and not the word *πνεύματι*. Now, the word *νοῦς* clearly signifies the superior part of human nature; and, in fact, means the same thing with *ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος*, in a foregoing verse. He, therefore, could have intended nothing more by the term *νοῦς*, than natural conscience, and that same moral feeling which dictated those admirable expressions of Persius—

"Compositum jus fasque animo, sanctosque recessus
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto."

But, what confirms this persuasion is, that, in the eighth chapter, and always elsewhere, it is not *νοῦς* (as I conceive) in any instance, but *πνεῦμα* in all instances, by which he expresses the moral movement of the actual Christian. Not one word is said about the Spirit, in the former chapter; nothing but *πνεῦμα* (whether it be *πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, or *πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ*, which he may mean) in all, I may say, which occurs elsewhere. I must confine myself to giving you this hint, as I have, at this moment, neither time nor space to enlarge.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

January 22, 1830.

I TAKE a large sheet ; not with any strong hope of filling it, but that I may be sure of room to say what I wish, or can.

On further consideration, I am ready to think that some of my remarks on Edwards were not exactly founded ; for, on looking again into his account of himself, I find that he was far from being without that self-love which I was supposing him to have excluded from his system. In fact, it was so much otherwise, that the prospect of his own happiness seems continually in his view. For instance, after telling us (vol. i. p. 30) of his having had, “not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction” of God’s absolute sovereignty ; and of its being excited in him by an impression of these words—“Now, unto the King eternal,” &c. (1 Tim. i. 17) ; which, as he read, he says, there came into his soul, and was, as it were, diffused through it, “a sense of the glory of the Divine Being ; a new sense, quite different from any thing he ever experienced before ;” he adds, “I thought, with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to him in heaven, and be, as it were, swallowed up in him for ever.” In these concluding words, you perceive the chief mystical feeling. And yet, after all, it is but an illusion ; for he had, just before, shewn self-love to have its due place in his mind.

“Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.”

His plainer account of his feeling, in this respect, is given in a following page (38). After stating that God had appeared glorious to him on account of the Trinity, and that it made him have exalted thoughts of God, that he exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, he proceeds thus:—"The sweetest joys and delights I have ever experienced have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate, but in a direct view of the glorious things of the Gospel. When I enjoy this sweetness, it seems to carry me above the thoughts of my own good estate; it seems, at such times, a loss that I cannot bear, to take off my eye from the glorious pleasant object I behold without me, to turn my eye in upon myself and my own good estate."

Here, I think, we have the practical amount of his disinterested love; and I am ready to think, on the whole, that it well accorded with, though, as I said, it scarcely promoted, his high theory of predestination and election. But the other remarks which I made, I am disposed to adhere to. There, probably, never was a more metaphysical mind than that of Jonathan Edwards. And, therefore, I conceive, he could only apprehend the great objects of the invisible world in his own way. In fact, Calvinism itself, by whatever sort of mind it is taken up, appears to give, to that mind, a metaphysical turn. How much more marked, then, will be the result, when Calvinism is taken up by a singularly metaphysical mind? I doubt if such a mind is more capable of pure, simple, cordial love, than that of the most abstracted mathematician.

Doubtless, such a mind may admire, may contemplate, may be enraptured, and may, with all its heart, and soul, and strength, bow down and habitually adore ; but, still, its personal peculiarity will modify the movements of the inner man. And, though it will, truly and soundly (and may, like Edwards, ecstatically), love God, it will be in its own way ; that is, as I said, in a way of admiration, and adoration, and sense of glory, and excellence, and holiness, rather than with a predominant apprehension of transcendent goodness, and unmixed, unbounded amiability.

Where this latter sense of the Divine Being prevails, I should think there will be a deep indisposition to Calvinism. But I can easily conceive that the transcendental views of Jonathan Edwards could find matter of delight in any thing which did not jar with his notions of Divine glory and holiness : a word which all Calvinists are fond of dwelling upon ; and in which I cannot but suspect them of including their fundamental idea of inexorable justice.

You ask me what I think about the two witnesses. I can say little on such a subject (if even I were more capable) in my present weak state. Besides, to say any thing interesting, would scarcely be possible in such a limited space. I am inclined to divide the prophetical portion of the Apocalypse into, as it were, four successive acts — seals, trumpets, thunders, vials. I imagine the seals prefigure the destruction of the Jewish polity ; and the trumpets, that of the Roman empire. The first four, that of the western empire, by the

irruption of the northern barbarians ; the fifth and sixth trumpets, the inroads on the eastern empire by Mahomet and the Saracens. Probably, a space of time is, then, supposed to intervene ; and, afterward, the period of the thunders proceeds. While the angel spoke, seven “thunders uttered their voices ;” and John was preparing to write what the thunders spoke, but the angel forbad him. Mark, then, here, three particulars : first, that those thunders spoke not together, but successively, otherwise St. John could not have understood them ; secondly, that St. John considered them as a part of the prophecy, or he would not have attempted to record them ; thirdly, that, from all which immediately follows, they are to be referred to the immediately following events—the rise of the beast, measuring of the temple, feeding of the woman in the wilderness, and the two witnesses.

Now, briefly (for my strength fails), I am inclined to deem these four particulars to be synchronical, and to describe the good and the evil features of the mystical 1260 days. I imagine these to have begun with the empire of Charlemagne, in A.D. 800, or 801. The measuring of the temple prefigures, in my mind, the sustenance of hierarchal piety in the Roman Catholic Church ; while the Church itself, in its ecclesiastical character, prefigured by “the holy city,” is trodden down. The feeding of the woman seems to me to be the preservation of sectarian piety, in the Paulicians, Waldenses, Albigenses, &c. And, in fact, in the different species of unestablished sects to the present day. Both which classes of Christians, Mil-

ner remarkably recognises, though without seeming to advert to the prophetic duality of preservation (vol. iii. 191). Here, then, in this two-fold design of preservation, it is, that I seem to myself to have a sort of key to the mystery of the two witnesses; which duality, I may say in a word, appears to arise necessarily out of the two-fold preservation of piety, in that disastrous season; inasmuch as the vital Christians in the measured temple would, in natural course, imply the pious labours of one set of good men; and the sustenance of sectarian religion in the recesses of society, would as necessarily produce another set of persons corresponding to the predicted character of the witnesses, however, in circumstantial matters, the movements of the one should differ from those of the other.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

January 30, 1830.

I FEEL little motive for taking a large sheet to-day; but still I wish to be at liberty; as I sometimes find it inconvenient to be straitened at the close, through absolute want of room to add, perhaps, one other word.

I am particularly obliged to you and Mrs. Cleaver for the account of Bishop Sandford's death. The single circumstance which lessened my satisfaction was, that I had intended to write

to him, in answer to a letter I had received; and put it off. You may never have happened to experience this feeling; but you may easily conceive that it is not a pleasant one.

I am glad, however, to have so authentic a report of the poor Bishop's happy exit.

I have read, since I received your letter, the review of Croly's book, in the "Eclectic." The reviewer agrees in a degree with you, in your estimate of his talents and style. But, not denying particulars to deserve notice, he considers him as having succeeded no better than so many of his predecessors. We are apprised of this judgment in the first paragraph; where it is remarked, that "this dry and barren region of investigation—(we speak," says he, "of prophetic studies as a branch of biblical criticism), not unfrequently presents, so to speak, a mirage to the fancy of the expositor. And it is difficult to persuade a person of sanguine temperament, that what he perceives so clearly, is a beautiful apparition, which will vanish on a nearer view."

I am induced, also, to transcribe the conclusion of the whole, as clearly and strongly expressing the reviewer's opinion. "Our readers will perceive, that with all the exceptions that lie against the author's scheme of interpretation, this is an original, and not uninteresting volume; abounding with historical information, and splendid writing, and suggesting ample materials for thought: although it supplies one instance more, in which the 'sagacity' of an ingenious man has been 'baffled' by the difficulties of the subject."

I, of course, can judge only from what I have read in the Review; but I think I find quite enough in the extracts and abridgments, to satisfy my mind, that Mr. Croly palpably traverses the Apocalyptic order. In my brief remarks on the Apocalypse, I ventured to state, that the seals, trumpets, thunders, and vials, are in strictly consecutive series. And so, Mr. Croly tells us, it is "usually conceived." His scheme, however, makes them nearly contemporaneous. In this notion he is, at least, not original; for such is the scheme of Bishop Walmsley, *alias* Pastorini; and I was led to examine it attentively by his book. But if it can be irrefragably proved that, after all, the different periods are exactly and uniformly consecutive, then Pastorini's and Croly's theories, as supposing the contrary, are alike unfounded and visionary.

I am afraid I can scarcely do justice to my argument in the few words I can give to it. It is this; that as each of the three first acts of the prophetic drama is concluded by a chorus (as if in the manner of the Greek tragedy), so, in each instance, it may be perceived that this intervening celebration actually supposes the complete conclusion of the period preceding. The period of the seals, for instance, which, while occupied in the first place with the overthrow of the Jewish polity, is extended, under the fifth seal, to the entire limit of Pagan persecution. "The souls" which then are seen under the altar, probably refer to those who suffered through Jewish malice; but it seems plain that those for whom they were "to

rest" for a time, take in all who were to "be killed" until Pagan power was finally overthrown. In this event, I conceive the prayer of the souls (in part anticipated in the destruction of the Jewish polity) was completely answered; and as those who then appeared as supplicants received a partial pledge of triumph ("white robes" being "given to every one of them"), so, when the period of the seals is concluded, and preparation for the second period (that of the trumpets) actually made, then we have a perfect and entire assemblage of all the sufferers during that former period, who appear in triumph, as having their trials ended, and the prayers which had been offered up, now wholly turned into joyful praises; both Jewish and Pagan persecution, in its sanguinary form (Julian's revival of it was not sanguinary), being now for ever at an end.

The regular, distinct, yet closely connected transition, therefore, from the period of the seals to that of the trumpets, is as strictly represented as it could be by significant figures. All the events of the first period must have closed, before the commencement of the second period; inasmuch as in the interval we have all the actors in that first period before us. There could not, therefore, have been any degree of synchronism between the one period and the other.

But if so, it seems, for the selfsame reason, that there could have been no degree of synchronism of the trumpets with the thunders, or of the thunders with the vials. For exactly as you have all the actors under the seals, celebrating their

song of triumph before the commencement of the events prefigured by the trumpets; so have you the entire number, sealed previously to the trumpets, celebrating an analogous chorus of praise, immediately after the preparatory measures and introductory movements attending the commencement of the events predicted by the thunders (I refer you to the first verses of the fourteenth chapter). And again, after the close of the period of the thunders, and previously to that of the vials, we have another strictly analogous celebration (chap. xv. 2, &c.); in which, as in the preceding instance, you had all that had been sealed; so here you have, evidently, all who had faithfully acted their part during the period of the thunders;—in other words, during the reign of the two beasts, and the testimony of the two witnesses, &c. Read the passage, and see whether there could have been such a complete assemblage and decided triumph, until the season of trial under the beasts was over. I ask, then, on the whole, have we not as conclusive evidence of consecutiveness to the exclusion of all intermingled synchronism, as could have been afforded us? I possibly could make out one more final triumph; but, though I should succeed, it is not necessary to my purpose. My query on the whole is, if there be in each successive instance such decisive evidence of precise concatenation of the preceding with the ensuing period, must there not necessarily be strict consecutiveness on the whole?

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

February 6, 1830.

I HAD hoped for a note from you this morning, not having heard from you since I saw you. If you are all well, I am the better satisfied.

I got, agreeably to Mrs. La Touche's directions, a draft for fifteen pounds, in favour of Mr. Dunn ; and sent it to him yesterday, requesting him to transmit it in three equal parts, for Mrs. La Touche, for you, and for me, to Mr. Wilberforce, towards his chapel.

I expressed my desire, for my own satisfaction, to learn the precise purpose of the said chapel ; assuring him, at the same time, that, however unchanged in my sentiments, I was so moderated in my reckonings of things, as to be far less disposed, than I was once, to inquire too curiously into the style of preaching, to the extension of which I was contributing.

The view which, for some time (years I may say), I have been led to take of the providential uses of Calvinism, has made me much less anti-calvinistic than in former times. My persuasion that it is not the doctrine of the New Testament, is, if possible, stronger than ever. But that it has been, not only of late years, but even since the Reformation, the great instrumental support of inward and spiritual religion (whatever scintillations there may have been of a brighter light,—indeed, in John Wesley's case, much more than a scintillation, though not a little mingled with

vaporous co-ingredients), I am assured, beyond a shadow of doubt.

Things about you, I should suppose, have this day a very wintry appearance; as the snow fell, probably, much more copiously on your high grounds than in the streets of Dublin. But, to a mind of natural relishes, a short season of such weather must have its interest; because it seems to belong to the regular order of nature in our happy portion of the globe; where we have, in general, only just so much of inclemency, as induces us to secure the competent means of safety and comfort in a manner not thought of in more luxurious regions.

Take up Bowdler's second volume, and read what he says of the love of God in the 395th page. Particularly note these words: "The love of God is no mysterious sentiment, inspired into the soul we know not how." There is much in the two paragraphs that I dislike; but particularly the words I have quoted. I, on the contrary, am persuaded that the love of God is, most strictly, a mysterious sentiment; as, in my mind, is every distinct and definite *Στοργή* of our nature. The special love of parents to their children is a mysterious sentiment; it is a thing of its own kind, as unexplainable as it is indubitable. Nay, that disinterested love of virtue, which at once, without reflection, engages the heart, to a signally good man, is also a mysterious sentiment; which is no more resolvable into any thing ulterior, and no more admits of analysis, than any of our ultimate bodily tastes or likings. We cannot explain,

for instance, why we like what is fragrant, and dislike what is fetid. And our imagination is similarly furnished with analogous propensions, of the reality of which we cannot doubt, but of the nature of which we can give no account,—why, for example, we delight in the “concord of sweet sounds.” Of such propensions (I return to those of the mind), I am convinced there is none deeper than the love of God. And I am satisfied that it exists, in our mental nature, radically (though in a crude and merely elemental state), from the first moment of our existence. While solely in this state, it manifests itself in numberless indirect ways. But when at length awakened, in its own proper form, it gives sufficient (I would say, on due reflection, decisive) evidence of its own appropriate nature: and that, though, generically, of the most perfect nature of love, yet it differs from every other species of love, inexpressibly more than conjugal love differs from common friendship. It is a movement of the soul, when really elicited, for which there is no parallel; a matter *sui generis*: verifying St. Augustin’s fine saying, “Fecisti nos tibi,” &c.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

February 11, 1830.

* * * You say, “Do you ever go out?”
No, my dear, I have not so much as thought of it.

The maxim of the Walpoles is peculiarly applicable to matters of health—"Tranquilla non movere." And I have had, comparatively, so quiet a winter, that I feel I should not yet venture on any movement which could, by possibility, provoke the derangement of nerves, which was, even a few months ago, so distressing. Besides, my habitual cough has, for some weeks past, become so much more severe, that I am sometimes (or, rather, have been) almost afraid to go down stairs. I do not think it, however, of any great moment, and consider it as not at all pulmonary, but as connected with my general malady. * * *

You may easily judge, however, that I am not in a good case for writing; and yet I do not like to leave an unfilled space in so small a sheet. I forget whether I called your attention, on the 2d, to a passage in Edwards, which I think very important; you will find it in the eighth volume, p. 150, § 8. There is, at present, a strange disposition, in part, at least, of what is accounted the religious world, to disunite vital Christianity from mind; as if our holy religion were just as well adapted to the capabilities of the savage, as to those of the improved citizen, or the enlightened philosopher. But the remark with which the section, to which I refer, opens, implies the reverse. Doubtless, Christianity opens her gracious portal to all sorts and conditions of men; and the least cultivated understanding may partake of her invaluable influences. But I cannot be more convinced than I am, that without an almost miraculous vouchsafement, the intellectual Christian

who, with the same cordiality, and with equal humility, applies himself to the study of the Divine word, will rise as much above the illiterate and unphilosophical Christian, as the scientific agriculturist, who is skilful in the qualities of grounds, and the operation of manures, will be more successful than the untaught peasant who cannot go beyond the common rules of husbandry. In short, let the zealous missionaries of the present day think what they may, I cannot but believe that the equally devout philosopher has an infinite advantage; inasmuch as, in my mind, there are no such depths and compass of philosophy, and no such exquisite exercises of philology, as are to be found in the Holy Scriptures.

April 3, 1830.

I had a visit from —; and I was struck with the Calvinistic turn of his conversation. He now means to go into orders; and, perhaps, forms this determination from having embraced religion in a definite way; in which, some how or other, the mind seems to obtain a very speedy portion of satisfaction in its own state. I hope this persuasion has something in it better than mere reliance upon doctrines. But I am not sorry that I, myself, have another view of things. I am at a loss to conceive how this doctrinal reliance leads to a life of deep and habitual devotion; and I am equally unable to imagine how, without this, there can be either comfort or safety in this present evil world.

April 26, 1830.

I grieve at what you tell me of Mr. —'s

heavy affliction. There is something peculiarly overwhelming in being so deprived of a beloved relation or friend. And, yet, to a person really prepared for the change, to be killed on the spot, is, in some degree, a consolatory consideration to the survivors. Still, these events are most awful. The wonder is, that they make so little impression. From this very circumstance we may deeply learn the necessity of Divine grace; through which, alone, we can practically, and yet cheerfully, feel that "in the midst of life we are in death." And, to be soberly conscious of this effect of God's grace upon our hearts and lives, affords the only real peace and satisfaction in this most uncertain world. * * * *

To go back, for a moment, to the subject of Divine grace. Nothing, I should think, could be less comfortable than that notion of its sovereignty which so many are disposed to maintain. But the assurance that, if we ask it we shall receive it, is, in my mind, the most comfortable feature in the Christian dispensation. And it was worthy of its Divine Author to make this animating truth, so largely and in so many ways, a topic of his discourse; for, to this point, assuredly, more than to any other, all that our Lord says of the certain success of prayer is applicable. His prime lesson is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." And, to implore the grace of God is, obviously, the most direct course we can take in obedience to that command. To desire grace with all our heart, is to "hunger and thirst after righteousness." And the result is made certain by

the words, “for they (that do so) shall be filled;” that is, shall receive from God himself,—the Father, Son, and Spirit,—those beatifying communications of inward life, of heavenly love, and of genuine and solid wisdom, which constitute our happiness here, and insure it to us for ever.

For something more on the topic with which I commenced, I refer you to the 441st Number of the “Spectator.”

May 12th, 1830.

* * * I think it very probable that few persons of religious sincerity and constitutional sensibility are exempt from the uncomfortable feelings I was describing; especially if there be any liability to derangement of the digestive organs. One great consolation, undoubtedly, is, that, after all, they are passing clouds. And, I am inclined to think, they may be serving us, on the whole of the account, much more than we are always aware of. I doubt whether we do not learn more of the value and happiness of religious affections, of being, as St. Paul expresses it, “rooted and grounded in love,” than we could conceive in a course of uninterrupted mental ease. And, by means of those inward obscurations, we may be not a little preserved from the far greater calamity of well-founded self-accusation. I therefore, on the whole, am willing that the wise and good God should take his own way with me; trusting that he will make all things work together for my good.

We, moreover, know little of the possible trials of other minds, as upright as our own. After

Robert Boyle's account of his deep distress, through scepticism, which, for many months, had made him wretched, he adds, "Yet, never after did those passing clouds cease, now and then, to darken the clearest serenity of his quiet; which made him often say, that injections of this nature were such a disease to his faith, as the tooth-ache is to the body; for, though it be not mortal, it is very troublesome." It was, perhaps, to him, a useful counterpoise to his uncommon success as a natural philosopher, and to his consequent celebrity in the world.

You see I can write a little, though I do it with caution.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAREST ———,

Feb. 13, 1830.

I THANK you with all my heart for your most kind note, and for the communication which accompanied it. I very much dreaded the effect which such a shock might have on ——— and on you; and I am deeply comforted by finding that, through the mercy and grace of God, you have firmness of mind to support, with submission and equanimity, this second and still more mournful privation.

It will, however, I well know, give you a fresh painful feeling to learn, that not many minutes after James had been with me, my dear Miss Fer-

gusson breathed her last. It was scarcely half an hour after hearing of the one death, that I was informed of the other. She had been alarmingly ill for some days, as if she had caught the prevalent influenza; and, on Friday, both Dr. Cheyne and Mr. Nicholls considered her as nearly in a hopeless state. This apprehension became still stronger the next morning; but it was scarcely supposed that the event was so very near at hand. Mr. Nicholls was in the house, and, I believe, saw her die. She had suffered greatly during two or three preceding days, and through the whole of the preceding night: but it pleased God to take her at length, to Himself, in the most tranquil manner possible. She retained her senses to the last moment, and without a struggle fell, as it were, quietly asleep.

You will ask in what situation, as to the economy of my life, this privation leaves me? On this subject I was not a little puzzled, and at an indescribable loss what arrangement to make. But how much was I surprised, on going down stairs, and conversing with her sister, to find that my dear departed friend had employed the last opportunities of occasional comparative remission, in making the best practicable arrangement for me, by obtaining a promise from her good and kind sister, that she would continue to live in this house, and fill her place in every thing; and that her respectable, sensible, and quiet husband should live sometimes with her, and sometimes with his daughters. In short, I was surprised to find myself so wonderfully provided for, where doubt

and darkness had been in such possession of my mind. * * * *

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

July 1, 1830.

* * * * It seems to me that Scotland has a proneness to excess, as well as to novelty, against which it has no competent guard. The whole service being dependent on the minister leaves an inevitable opening to vacillations of every kind : whereas such a Liturgy as ours gives a continual lesson of religious sobriety, to which no well-disposed mind can be wholly insensible.

I, therefore, tremble lest any unlocking of our sacred arch could, by any misfortune, take place. I lament to think that so many seem not to feel the value of our great providential treasure, for such I cordially esteem the devotional part of our Common-Prayer Book, especially such prayers as are directly taken from the ancient liturgies. It is too small praise to say of these that they are scriptural. I hope and trust no one estimates the New Testament higher than I do ; yet, I must say, that those prayers are more than derived from Scripture ; that, rather, they are a kind of enlargement of it. I do not mean of its Divine truths, for to those nothing can be added ; but of its inestimable compendiums of Christian principle, which are sometimes given in a sentence or two,

as if to enrich Christian minds with a comprehensive instruction of all that is essential, in a form easy to be fixed, and scarcely possible to be forgotten: and exactly of this nature, and of a wonderfully resembling quality, I regard many of our Collects.

July 21, 1830.

* * * * If it were once felt that the Gospel is a manifestation of divinely impressive facts, and not a notification of doctrinal theory, any further than as implied in those facts; and that it is, therefore, no subject for abstract cogitation, but a matter of which the heart alone can take cognisance, there would be a solid ground laid for theological pacification. It is, at present not so much about the meaning of Holy Scripture that men are contending, as about the construction of that doctrinal creed which has been so elaborately formed out of it. This it is, and this only, which furnishes all the grounds of dispute: and could theories be banished from the minds of theologians, and the Holy Scripture impartially examined, I conceive it would soon appear that there was no real foundation for the doctrinal deductions on which Calvinists so much rely. Their whole theory of forensic justification, for instance, rests on the supposition of a primeval malediction. But was it an expression of malediction, that God made coats of skins, and clothed our first parents for their comfort and convenience, when they as yet knew not how to do it for themselves? This single instance of gracious condescension shews, that, notwithstanding their act of disobedience,

they were the objects not of Divine wrath, but of Divine mercy; and that the whole proceeding was the beginning of a scheme for exercising, through the Divine Mediator, the wisdom as well as the goodness of the infinite God, in a way in which only it could be manifested on such a subject as man became through the fall.

July 31, 1830.

* * * * * In a few days, now, a good many contests will be decided; and, I fear, not in the best possible way, as so many gentlemen have retired from parliamentary life. In truth, we are in circumstances altogether not easy to be calculated: and the recent movements in France, with all which may grow out of them, will create, too probably, new difficulties and hazards. In such a state of things, the firm reliance of the mind on God's ever watchful, profoundly wise, and eventually beneficent Providence, is the only resource which can satisfy the understanding, or solidly tranquillise the heart.

I am, as I have more than once observed to you, an earnest pursuer, at least I hope so, of rational faith. I, therefore, rejoice to discover in the New Testament any feature or circumstance, not observed before, which adds strength to its internal evidence by exact correspondence with the reason and nature of things. Something of this kind struck me, within these few days, in the tenth chapter of the Acts. The suitableness of the different circumstances, in this narrative, to each other, has always impressed me; but I did

not before advert to a felicity of progress in the mind of St. Peter, which gives, I conceive, an inexpressible heightening to this most important record.

You perceive that Peter is first divinely prepared for entering upon the new service in which he was about to be engaged, by the vision of the "great sheet, let down from heaven." Till then, Jewish prejudices had dominion over him; but that notification of the Divine will was too express to be resisted. He accordingly obeys the order of the Holy Spirit, "to go with the men, doubting nothing:" and, on entering into Cornelius's house, he at once declares that God had taught him "to call no man common or unclean."

He then hears Cornelius's relation of the wonderful vouchsafement with which he had been favoured: and, in his reply, we have this declaration of a still further insight into the unlimited, yet still discriminative, mercies of Heaven. He speaks as if he had received from Cornelius's account of himself, a new and most important matter of instruction: "Of a truth, I perceive that God is not a respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." Here, therefore, was a great advance in St. Peter's mind, which, it appears, needed much to satisfy it respecting that equal admission of Gentile believers, in the commencement of which he was then so signally engaged. But he had still, it would appear, some portion of Jewish prejudice remaining, by which he might have been embarrassed in the completion of his

service; I mean, in the actual administration of Christian baptism to uncircumcised Gentiles: and, therefore, he is favoured with an additional confirmation,—no question, most suitable in itself, but admirably fitted to make Peter the powerful defender of what God was then doing by his ministry—I mean the descent of the Holy Ghost, while he was yet speaking, as on the Apostles themselves at the beginning.

How effectually Peter was instructed by the exquisite management of this momentous transaction, we see in the subsequent chapter, and also in the fifteenth chapter. In both of which we have impressive evidence of the effect which had been produced on the Apostle's mind. It was his sound principle, that the Christian should be ready to give a reason of the hope that was in him; and, from the whole course of the great business which he had been selected to perform, and all he afterwards said concerning it, it was the demand of his own mind to possess a reason, such as would preclude all subsequent doubt or question. And he was amply satisfied, circumstantially as well as substantially, in this requisition.

Monday, August 16, 1830.

I was deeply gratified and comforted by your letter of Wednesday, received this morning. I think you had not received my letter of Friday, the 6th, when you wrote. It was in a sufficiently croaking style; but when it was written, I rejoiced that I had accomplished it; for I had not long despatched it, when (clearly from the exposure of

the day before) I was seized with such disturbance, both of head and stomach, as to unfit me for every thing, I might say, for two or three following days. I thank God, I am now somewhat better. But I am still oppressed with a more severe nervous paroxysm than for twelve months before. It might, however, be much more distressing than it is; though it seems to be of a more mixed nature than any former attack; I mean, to have more in it of corporeal indisposition. Still, the basis of consolation remains the same, that, "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth."

* * * I congratulate you on having it in your power to attend the service of the Church; and, particularly, as it was a day of administering the sacrament. I dare say you never relished it so much before. I dare say, too, that, over and above the intrinsic excellence and beauty of our sacred celebrations, your late opportunities of observing sectarian vacillation (at least, at some greater nearness) made you feel the value of a settled order, and an established guidance. * *

There is a feature in St. Paul's Epistle to Titus, which strikes me as remarkable; though, why it should be so prevalent there, and not occur elsewhere, I cannot explain. It is the expression which, with little variation, there presents itself (or, perhaps, more strictly, with no variation); twice of *Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ*; while, between both, we have *τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Now, it strikes me, that in the expression *τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ*, St. Paul means to unite the Divine nature of the Redeemer in the idea of

God, while he speaks distinctly of the man Christ Jesus (iii. 6) as, mediately, the Saviour, and (7th) as the immediate source of that grace whereby we are justified; in accordance with the expression (Rom. v.), *χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου*. Compare the two passages, and I think you'll see the sameness of idea. Observe, also, that in Titus, ii. 10, you find the significant expression of *τὴν διδασκαλίαν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ*. The doctrine he means, must have been that of Christ; and yet he describes it as the doctrine of "our Saviour God." And, as if he liked the appellation he had used, he repeats it, as it were, with peculiar suitableness, in the beginning of the following chapter, where he speaks of *ἡ χρηστότης καὶ ἡ φιλοανθρωπία* of God. I do not, therefore, know, on the whole, in what other instance the strict and proper Deity of the *Λόγος* is more impressively brought before us. And it seems as if it were done, not deliberately, or of set purpose, but, as it were, by a spontaneous thought; which, having once used, he could not immediately part with, but loved to dwell on the delightful image of conjoint Deity which had thus happily sprung up in his mind.

I fear I have not been able to express my meaning.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

October 21, 1830.

I WAS greatly gratified by your letter of the 15th, which I received yesterday, by the mid-day mail.

I was beginning to be anxious, though, I was conscious, without reason ; but still it was a great comfort to me to have your letter, after five o'clock, put into my hand.

I am very glad to receive so favourable a report of my dear Mrs. ———. You know how greatly I have loved her ; yet, I assure you, your repeated sketches of her, in your letters, while on your British tour, have made me (if that were possible) love her better than ever. You can hardly imagine how interestingly you, again and again, brought her before me. I must think that some (I hope not a few) on this earth, are, as it were, native favourites of Heaven ; they are precious gems in the mass of society ; and are, doubtless, formed to contain and communicate such influences within their several spheres, as will advance the moral health, and increase the moral happiness, of mankind. In this distinguished and inestimable class, I cannot but place my dear Mrs. ——— ; and I need not specify to you the grounds on which I do so.

* * I understand ——— dislikes the farming system of the Female Orphan House. Possibly it might have made little sensible difference had another plan (that of simple purchase) been pursued. But, I believe, the farming system has been really a better method ; as contributing to serve the health, and even heighten the spirits, of the orphans. They have always been sure of having what was pure and wholesome. And I cannot but believe that the very thought of their living upon the produce of the place has made their meals

more refreshing; and more fully realised that beautiful expression of St. Paul, when, speaking to the Lycaonians of God's natural blessings, he represents Him as filling the hearts of his creatures "with food and gladness." — appears to have no regard for sentiment. And, I grant, it is delicate ground, liable, in most instances, to degenerate into fairy land. But this is one of the cases in which — knows how to keep the happy temperament. She neither "blindly creeps, nor sightless soars." Her knowledge of human life has preserved her from over-estimating sentiment; while her equally deep acquaintance with human nature has insured her giving sentiment its due place and value. And who can deny that she has succeeded accordingly?

I cannot doubt that our government has acted rightly in forbidding O'Connell's proposed meeting. But, I humbly hope an infinitely greater Power will counteract his mischievous designs. I have ever loved that petition — "Give peace in our time, O Lord; for there is none other that fighteth for us, but only Thou, O God!" And even the heathen poet utters what is as cheering as it is applicable:—

*Vis consilii expers, mole ruit suâ ;
Vim temperatam Dii quoque provehunt
In majus: iidem odere vires
Omne nefas animo moventes."*

* * The younger part of —'s family are now zealously engaged in a religious life, according to Dr. Malan's views; between which, and Mr. Erskine's, there is, I should think much agree-

ment, both being of opinion that the great act of faith is at once to assure one's self of the Divine favour. But, upon this point, it is very sensibly remarked by a late writer on the subject (after expressing his surprise, with what facility Dr. Malan makes converts in this way, posting them in a very summary manner upon the heights of assurance), that "the Bible gives me just the same authority to believe that Christ died for others, as that he died for me. And, upon this plan, I ought to be assured of the salvation of my neighbour, as well as my own." He, afterward, thus expresses himself:—"Really, from what I have known of the religious world, and Christian professors, there is far less cause for eagerness to fill their minds with assurance and joys, than to rebuke their bad tempers, their unholy spirit, their dwarfish attainments, their inconsistencies, and their worldliness. To thousands and tens of thousands, Dr. Malan's notions will come as sweet and savoury doctrine; while, in point of fact, the matter is very doubtful whether they have actually entered the strait gate, and are walking in the narrow way."

The writer of these strictures is a Mr. Chaplin; I suppose, a dissenting minister. It is a pleasant thing that so many of that class are disposed to contend for the moral substance of religion; while, at the same time, they evidently need, themselves, a better digested and more firmly established possession of theological truth.

You will be pleased to know that I am rather more at ease than I was last month.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE REVEREND
CHARLES FORSTER.

MY DEAR CHARLES, Dawson Street, Oct. 27, 1830.

My kind friend will, I am sure, allow me to acknowledge, through you, his two gratifying communications of September the 26th and October the 3d. I received with sincere pleasure the interesting republication in which the latter was lodged; and am glad to possess, in so convenient a form and so fit a union, three* of the most unsophisticated effluences of the Christian head and heart to be found in our language. I beg you to tell my friend, that I consider it to have been a singularly happy thought, which, I sincerely hope, he may follow up with other republications of a similar nature.

I next thank you, my dear Charles, for your very kind letter, and particularly for the circumstantial account you give of the Bishop's present state of health; in which nothing to me appears more consolatory than the report you make of his high mental vigour. The enjoyment of unabated strength, in this instance, lessens the severity of every other kind of bodily suffering; and the saying of Solomon is verified in one important sense, at least: "The spirit of a man may bear his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?"

I am poorly qualified to suggest any hint which could be useful or interesting to Sir Henry Hal-

* Scougal, Howe, and Cudworth.

ford. My miscellaneous reading was never extensive, and, for the last two or three years, has been more than ever contracted: I can only, therefore, venture to observe that, in such discourses delivered at the present time, every proper occasion ought to be taken to establish the independent existence of man's immortal spirit. I remember that Haller, in, I believe, the concluding paragraph of his Discourse on Physiology, makes a strong remark on the mental vigour manifested, in so many instances, at the very close of life, amid all the extremes of bodily decay; thence concluding, that there is an immortal part in our nature, not exposed to the accidents of our animal frame. But, strange to tell, this valuable passage was, if my memory does not grossly deceive me, left out in the English translation; which probably, being made in Scotland, was thus wretchedly adapted to the infidel principles which then particularly prevailed in that country. I mention this circumstance from very distant recollection, but I think I am correct: it so struck me at the time, that I was not likely to forget the impression.

But how am I to understand the term, "prophetic power?" Nothing which is really prophetic can arise from a merely physical cause. That disease should create a disposition to foretel future events, I can understand; but that it should give a power of foretelling, is beyond my comprehension. Explain this matter in the next letter with which you favour me.

You express a wish that I should suggest something on which my friend might exercise

his editorial skill and industry. This desire meets, at the present moment, a strong feeling which has been excited by an author with whom I am but lately much acquainted: his name I had repeatedly heard, but I had not so looked into his voluminous works, as to be at all competently informed respecting his value as a writer. The person to whom I allude is the celebrated antagonist of Deism in all its forms—John Leland; many years a Presbyterian minister in this city. It was Dr. Guinness who drew my attention to him, and lent me his sermons, which, as soon as I could, I purchased for myself. They fill four octavo volumes, and are all respectable, some highly interesting. It is, however, only a part of the second volume which I could wish to see republished; namely, sixteen sermons on the subject of Providence. This important subject seems to me to be treated in them in a very masterly manner; in fact, I remember nothing of the kind by which I was equally interested. They are distinguished, as I conceive, by manly and unaffected eloquence, an uncommon felicity of Scripture quotation, and a powerful maintenance of the doctrine of a particular Providence, as sober as it is luminous. I know nothing, therefore, which, in my mind, could be more suitable for the present time, than a republication of those discourses. It is to be lamented that, on the great point which is discussed in them, doubts appear to be entertained by many who profess to be orthodox Christians.

How far I may be right in apprehending a

growing tendency to this species of unbelief, the Bishop and you are better qualified to judge than I am. But I could wish you both to look into those sermons, and see how far you agree with me in my estimate of their value.

That he was not of our Church will, I think, form no objection: for what Johnson said of Watts, may with equal truth be applied to him: that "such he was, as every Christian Church would rejoice to have adopted." Besides, I confess, I should not be sorry that the Bishop were to give the lesson, which such a republication would afford to the Dissenters of these times. I am afraid their temper towards the Established Church becomes more and more hostile; but, still, many of them are conscientious, and not incapable of feeling that their hostility is excessive, if it were proved to them that the leading functionaries of the Establishment do not regard them with like animosity. I should think the Bishop's republication of a work of signal merit, by one of the most eminent Dissenters of the last age, could hardly fail to serve such a purpose; while its edifying tendency would evince, to all discerning readers, the wisdom of again bringing it into public notice.

Probably Leland's anti-deistical works are not unknown to the Bishop: if he has looked much into them, I think he will agree with me, that when Butler and Secker left the Dissenters, they did not leave behind them an individual nearer to themselves, in mental endowments, than John Leland. He may not have had the profound thought of the one, nor the comprehensive know-

ledge of men and things possessed by the other; but he excels Butler in clearness and Secker in fluency. In these respects, I should think he was one of the best writers of his time.

From the three instances together, it would seem that divinity students among the Dissenters received, at that time, a very solid education; much more so, I should imagine, than was then received either at Oxford or Cambridge: and may we not suppose that this was the providential reason for the choice of those two illustrious men, to perform the services which the state of things just then urgently required, and which can never, in any state of things, lose their value. But, how wonderful was it that two Dissenters should be brought into the Church of England, to give new tone to its theology; and two clergymen, not long after, be sent forth from the Church to revive sectarian piety in the body of the people; and that in their several ways they should have risen to such eminence!

I gave my worthy and sensible friend, Dr. Cheyne, a copy of Townson's Sermons; and he has repeatedly expressed his admiration of them. He accounts them the best sermons, for family reading, he ever met with. He thinks a finer spirit could not be manifested, nor Christian piety exhibited in a fairer form. In short, he thinks it a great pity that all the sermons, which Dr. Townson left, should not be given to the Christian world.

Give my cordial love to the Bishop; receive it yourself; and believe me

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P. S.—I have said nothing of my own health : I must, therefore, meet your kind wishes for information on that point, by stating that I certainly do not lose ground ; that nervousness, in one form or other, is continually affecting me, but by no means as distressingly as formerly ; and that its symptoms, though sometimes not a little uncomfortable, seem, on the whole, more superficial as well as more transitive. My eye, just now, is annoying me, but I hope the annoyance will soon go off.

FROM THE SAME TO —.

MY DEAR —,

October 29, 1830.

* * * I am very glad you saw that ceremony, as, by that means, you have now a knowledge of the Roman Catholic religion, which no mere reading could have given you. And I shall, certainly, be glad to hear a particular description of it. I, myself, have seen, more than once, the celebration of mass, but never with any special display ; which, I suppose, was aimed at in that exhibition. I hope to hear all about it from you ; and especially concerning those parts of the business which struck you as dismal.

Considered in a providential light, the Roman Catholic system is, altogether, a very mysterious matter. It has strangely modified our holy religion into an accordance with the very lowest tastes and impressibilities of human beings ; inso-much that we might wonder at its not having wholly lost its internal spirit in the gross sensitive-

ness of its external exercise. But this, happily, has not been permitted. The measured temple (Rev. xi. 1) has, still, been preserved in the midst of the desolated city. And even the corruptions which would appear to have substituted almost Paganish rites for pure Christian devotion, may have been so overruled as to have become, in some sort, preservatives of that ancient faith and piety, which, viewed in themselves, they might appear fitted to destroy.

When reformed Christians become “of one mind,” and are brought nearer εἰς τὴν ἐνότητά τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ, then the massy concrete of the Roman Catholic religion (which, in the meantime, may be guarding those vital principles which it outwardly disfigures, and, as far as it is allowed, inwardly adulterates) may be safely and suitably dissolved. And its Popish votaries (who, even then, may hate to be reformed) forced to go off to their murky retreats, from the brilliancy of orient truth, like owls and bats at the rising of the sun.

I can scarcely conceive any adjunct of religious solemnities to be in worse taste, than that business of incense. It, no doubt, had its use in the Jewish tabernacle and temple. But then it was managed in a different manner, being a secret business, and not exhibited before the people. It was a matter of mysterious instruction, and not of sensitive exhibition.

My eye is in a diseased state; and yet, reading your letter this morning did, certainly, not hurt it. But I fear I shall not be able to read this letter;

and, therefore, should you find many errors in it, I hope you will be able to correct them for yourself; and I am sure you will forgive me.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

November 15, 1830.

* * * * I have just been pointing out to my friend Spedding three instances of elegant composition in St. Paul. The first two occur in Rom. xi. Observe, in the twelfth verse, how the term “fall” is used, in the first instance, in consonance with what had gone before; but, as that image would not accord with what he next meant to say, he throws in another image, in strict rhetorical agreement with the meditated expression; “now, if the fall of them be the riches of the world; and the diminishing of them, the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness;” to which last, the term “fall” has no affinity, whereas “diminishing” is in the most perfect harmony.

Again, in the sixteenth verse, the word “lump” is used. “For, if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy.” But this expression would not suit the beautiful descant which he is about to introduce, respecting the wild and the cultivated olive-tree. Accordingly, he introduces the connecting position, “if the root be holy, so are the branches;” from whence, the purposed allegory flows on with entire fitness.

The third, you are probably aware of, in the

third chapter of the first Corinthians. You perceive, that, from the sixth verse to the ninth verse, the Apostle uses the metaphor of planting; but he wishes to urge another matter, to which that figure would not apply: and, therefore, he makes a transition from planting to building: by which latter image, he most appositely illustrates the instruction which he proceeds to press: "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

I certainly received no manner of hurt from going to the orphan house on the first. I made no false step, as in the former instance; and was, therefore, in no danger of injury. What I complained of, was merely one of the vagaries of my malady.

It is possible that I have written confusedly, as Mr. James Scott and Mr. Dickinson have been sitting in active conversation beside me. And it is evidence that I am not very nervous to day, when I can escape distraction of thought. At least, I hope I have so escaped it as not to write nonsense. And now, I dare not read what I have written; as, though my eye is somewhat better to-day, were I to use it in reading, I might produce a disturbance which might annoy during the evening.

FROM THE SAME TO THE RIGHT HON. _____,

MY DEAR MR. _____,

November, 1830.

EVER since I received a mark of your kind remembrance from _____, I have been wishing to write to you, were it only to assure you of the

unabated interest which I take in every thing which could concern your comfort or happiness. But one of the effects of my nervous malady, is a disinclination to employ my pen, except when I am absolutely obliged to do so. I doubt, sometimes, whether I am not morally blamable in yielding to this weakness; and the occurrence of such a thought at the present time, is one of my motives for resolving to defer no longer to say something to you, were it only to keep myself in your friendly recollection.

Most certainly I should have much greater pleasure in your return to office in ordinary times, but the difficulty of existing circumstances has, doubtless, made it so much the more your duty to obey the call; and I sincerely hope that the hand of the great God may be with you and your colleagues, and may enable you to steer the vessel of the state through the rocks and quicksands amongst which it has become entangled. I cannot venture to make any remark on the present state of things. You know that I have had a great jealousy of what is called reform; but as in the natural, so in the political body, dangerous operations may become necessary for the preservation of life; and, therefore, though my apprehensions respecting eventual results are very little abated, I do not presume to dispute the expediency of yielding, in some discreet and cautious measure, to the urgency of these strange times: in fact, I could not materially differ from the sentiments so well expressed by Sir Thomas Acland, in his late speech at Exeter.

There is, however, one feature in the present aspect of political events, which gives me a better hope of our escaping absolute disruption, and which, perhaps, may be regarded as a prognostic of merciful designs even for the present generation. I mean the comparatively temperate procedure, hitherto, of the French, both leaders and people, in circumstances which seemed at first to threaten a return of former horrors. Their preference of monarchy to a formal republic, and their retention of so much of the former charter, would seem to indicate a remarkable advance in their own national character, and hold out a valuable example to those other communities who are so eager to emulate the revolutionary part of their proceedings. If it shall please Providence to preserve them even in their present moderation, an appeal to their conduct may have its use in strengthening the resistance which, I trust, will still be successfully made to the infuriate efforts of British radicalism. Alas! alas! that such an appeal should ever become necessary in our signally favoured country.

I almost doubt whether I should, at this moment, occupy your time with remarks, yet I am sure you will forgive me for offering to you one thought which peculiarly impresses my mind. It is impossible not to see that the destinies of the Established Church are at this time trembling on the balance. What, therefore, statesmen may be compelled to do respecting its temporalities, I shrink back from conjecturing. That affair, interesting as it is, lies within the sphere of secular domination, and must be committed to over-ruling

Providence. But God forbid that the sacred ark itself should ever be touched by the rude and reckless hands of speculators, who are utterly incapable of distinguishing the “*opinionum commenta*” of which this age is so prolific, from the “*judicia naturæ*,” which never can be violated without injury to the deepest interests of man: I say, therefore, without hesitation, that I would cordially prefer the reducing of our Church to the state in which the French legislature have placed their late establishment, to the slightest parliamentary tampering with our Common-Prayer Book; and I should tremble at the thought even of a synod such as the present time could furnish, being intrusted with its revision.

I do not intend to assert the perfection of our Liturgy, nor to deny that it might, in some few particulars, have been made less liable to plausible objections. But even in some of the limited instances to which I refer (such, for instance, as the Athanasian creed), there may have been an order of Providence for deep purposes. At any rate, I do not hesitate to say, that there never was a time of less competency for judging what ought to be retained, or what might with advantage be altered, than at this season of unexampled dissonance and headlong rashness.

But what weighs with me above every other consideration is, that our Liturgy appears to have a “*quid divinum*” in it, of which, perhaps, even its original compilers were not distinctly aware. It was their direct object to separate the dross of later superstition from the pure gold of ancient

faith and piety; and they have succeeded, I conceive, in forming a conservatory of primitive truth and vital religion, which assuredly has no parallel in the Christian world. In the very early ages, Christian piety had both heights and depths of which modern religion, even when most sincere, seldom forms an idea. In our liturgical compositions, and in these alone (except by derivation, in several happy instances from these), are those heights and depths substantially and vividly exemplified.

I trust I cordially value the immense good which has been effected by means of Lutheran and Calvinist piety; and many individual votaries of the one and of the other, but especially of the latter, have diffused a vivid light and a powerful influence; in fact, of such kinds, and eminently of the Calvinist kind, has hitherto been, except in our own Church, and not seldom even there, the great weight of Protestant exemplariness; to the support of which, during the last three hundred years, I am inclined to think that the Calvinistic intermixture has materially contributed. But still I venture to affirm that, as our Lord said respecting divorces, "from the beginning it was not so." The piety of the first ages was not Calvinistic piety;—I appeal to Milner for the truth of this assertion;—while, as I hinted before, I acknowledge many instances of individuals, soaring, as it were, above their enclosures, and inhaling a purer air of heaven—I name Doddridge as an example of such happier elevation.

It is, then, I repeat, in our liturgical forms alone, that the undiluted essence of the first ages

of the Church has been, as it were, hermetically sealed, and, I would even say, mysteriously enshrined. I must not occupy you with the expansion of this notion, respecting which I seem to myself to feel that I could say much, both true and important. But I will appeal to your own feeling whether, except in the Holy Scriptures alone, you have found any thing so deeply impressive as the greater part of our Collects? They are not, as you know, mere compilations of texts, but they contain congenial matter, they breathe a co-identical spirit; as St. Peter with St. Paul, or St. James with St. John. If Robert Boyle be right, no expositor has yet fathomed the deep excellences of the Holy Scriptures; and I am confidently persuaded that the same may be said of our devotional formulas, and that, therefore, next to the Sacred Volume (and with wonderful approximation), there is not on this earth so mysteriously valuable a deposit, as that contained in our incomparable Common-Prayer Book.

May you, therefore, be inclined in your heart to be a watchful guardian of this inestimable treasure! May you feel it your peculiar duty to make the preservation of its integrity a chief object of your care! and may the blessing of God be upon you, as it was on Joseph in Egypt, and on Daniel in Babylon, and not only guide you in all your political movements, but, in all conditions and changes, keep your heart supremely and indissolubly fixed upon himself.

Believe me, my dear Mr. ———,

Your ever faithful Friend,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

December 23, 1830.

As I might be prevented from writing to you to-morrow, I do not wish to defer acknowledging the affectionate note I have received. I wrote yesterday in a doleful strain; and I cannot, this day, say any thing better of my state. But it would answer no good end to go into particulars, where I might speak erroneously from a false view of my sensations. I sometimes think that I am not very far from the unseen world. And if so, and if God fits me for it, and enables me to bear with patience what he is pleased I should suffer in the passage, I shall have the same cause for thankfulness that I have had through the whole of life. I humbly trust he will not impute to me various defects (and, I fear, neglects) of duty, with which I charge myself through life; and that he will, in every respect, be merciful to me, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ; for, to him I humbly hope I am as sincerely disposed to do honour, as if I were of the same opinion with those who think themselves alone truly evangelical.

I hear a knock: I suspect it is Dr. Cheyne. It is; therefore

Believe me ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO MRS. PETER LA TOUCHE.

MY DEAR MRS. LA TOUCHE,

Christmas-day, 1830.

I CANNOT suffer this day to pass by, without expressing to you, in the single way within my power, my deep and heartfelt wishes that every return of this day, which God, in his goodness and wisdom, permits you to see, may afford you fresh reasons for acknowledging his care over you, and his loving-kindness toward you. I am confident it is the chief desire of your heart, that every successive birth-day should find you in increased fitness for that which is the truest of all birth-days to the divinely enfranchised spirit. But how little, in this great respect, can we do for ourselves! I feel, by daily experience, that it is God himself who must work in us, both to will and to do. But the encouragement is infallible—"Ask, and ye shall receive."

May this happiness be realised in its fulness in you, my inexpressibly valued friend, in our dearest Kate, and in myself! And, to this end, may the Holy Spirit initiate us into the great mystery of Godliness, that we may enjoy all the influences, and partake of all the consolations, which have been provided for us in the wonderful vouchsafement which is, this day, commemorated!

Ever yours, my dearest Mrs. La Touche, and my dearest Kate: may God grant his best blessings to you both! So cordially prays

Your faithful Friend,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR MRS. LA TOUCHE,

Dec. 27, 1830.

I CANNOT suffer a day to pass without acknowledging your most gratifying and comfortable note. I humbly hope the language I used, in mine to you, was the simple dictate of my mind and heart, in some measure derived from my feeling of my own wants and weaknesses. The manner in which you have received my thoughts, gives me a still stronger persuasion of their soundness and their truth.

* * * I have sent you the paper of this day with peculiar pleasure. Nothing of the kind could be more gratifying than to find the gloomy anticipations in the first page, so happily contradicted by the events described in the last. I trust we may now regard the danger as fairly gone by; and may consider the state of things as likely to be permanent. If so, what is there in the page of history to be compared with this later French revolution? which, having lasted from the latter end of July to this latter end of December, I would hope we may now contemplate as brought to a close. If so, I repeat, what is there like it in the history of the world? Was ever a season of the most perilous excitement so kept within bounds by predominant good feeling in the respectable public, and judicious firmness in the ruling authorities? The Chamber of Peers have assuredly done themselves honour; and the conduct of the king has, probably, more than ever

riveted the affections of the people. But the finest feature is the conduct of the youths of the polytechnic, law, and medical schools; who, after having headed the popular phalanx to displace the unfortunate Charles, now stood forth, with like unanimity, to support the king, the law, and public order; and, by doing so, have probably cast the preponderating weight into the scale of national security.

Altogether, I must view these events, so far exceeding every supposed ground of hope, as evidencing the advance of human society in virtuous and sober habits: and, irreligious as the French nation (I am afraid, too justly) is deemed to be, I cannot but conclude that, in proportion as they improve in moral feeling, and principles of wisdom and justice, the more will they be fitted for estimating the true value, and receiving the pure spirit, of our holy religion.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

Alas! I do not mean *sober* in the Christian, or even strictest, sense.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

December 29, 1830.

* * * * I think Mr. ——— will not find what, I presume, he wishes for. I dare say he wishes to know in what degree the religion of the

heart prevailed among the French Protestants at the time referred to. I conceive it would be hard to find any record of this matter, as, I suspect, there was little of such a nature to be recorded. I remember talking, at one time, to Miss —, about the religious character of the refugees; and her opinion was, that they were men of high spirit and honour, but knew little about the thing for which they were suffering. In fact, French Protestantism was too political a business to contain much of religious affection. They had gained their excessive privileges by the secular arm; and they were, of course, forcibly deprived of those privileges as soon as the ruling powers felt themselves able to depress them. When thus reduced to weakness, religious persecution opened upon them with all its horrors, and a heroic regard for their religion made them flee from their country. They were highly respectable as men, but seldom well-informed, and still more rarely affectionate, in religion. They were most conscientious and decorous, but, probably, were little more. Their preachers, before the Revocation, were sensible, and, doubtless, most sincere: some were of rather eminent talents; but, I imagine, there was little warmth or practical zeal. Several of their sermons remain, and, probably, would be found to have little animation. As I said, the political, and even warlike, spirit, which had so long prevailed among the entire class, little contributed to a warm feeling of piety, even among the clergy. If Mr. — looks into Mosheim, cent. xvii. sect. 2, Part II. chapter 2, he will find a clear account of the dis-

mal event, but not one word respecting the religious character of either laity or clergy.

You ask what I think of O'Connell. I answer, I do not think about him; for I could not think of him without disturbing my mind. I can only look to Divine Providence to carry us through the storm, and to put wise and efficient counsels into the minds of our perplexed and, I fear, not very adequate rulers.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

P. S.—The weather is still, I think, aggravating my malady.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO —.

Jan. 4, 1831.

I AM myself suffering a good deal from nervousness, and am just now a little hippish. I have not seen Dr. Cheyne these several days. I suppose he was too uneasy about his son; and he, probably, does not imagine that I wish to see him as a physician. I scarcely conceive what he could do for me; for nervousness seems to lie quite beyond the range of medical prescription.

My complaint is the same which I mentioned in a late note, invincible weakness of the bowels. I feel no pain, but a distressing sense of tension. It is, doubtless, a nervous sensation; but the torpor which it produces constitutes something like real illness.

We had our board in this room yesterday; and we did all necessary business. Among other matters, we sanctioned the delivery, to their friends, of three girls; and, in consequence of this dismissal, the number of the inmates is now strictly what it should be—one hundred and sixty.

Mr. Stanley has, within this day or two, sent the usual call for an estimate for the present year.

Jan. 7, 1831.

I cannot suffer ——'s most kind note to pass even a day without grateful acknowledgment; and yet I must acknowledge it through you, as I am this day particularly unequal to writing to herself. My head became affected with lightness yesterday evening, which was attended with tendencies to sickness of stomach, as usual. I am still suffering from the same cause; and cannot, at this moment, tell how I shall be during the remainder of the day.

My eye still continues incompetent to every thing except reading your notes, which I have done without the least hurt, and writing in the manner which you see; that is, with as little use of the eye as possible.

Jan. 15, 1831.

I wished yesterday to have thanked you for your kind and comfortable note, but it so happened that I was peculiarly employed; in fact, in writing to Mr. Stanley an explanation of the supposed increase of salaries in the Orphan House, of which I had reason to believe he had probably made a mistaken estimate. I accordingly ventured to lay

before him several facts tending to shew that the special committee of the House of Commons were less founded than they supposed, in taking such an increase for granted. My motive was, that Mr. Stanley, on receiving the estimate, wrote to the governors to say that, until he knew how far they had complied with the intimation of the committee in diminishing the salaries, he could not lay the estimate before the Lords of the Treasury. To this, a simple answer was given, stating the three instances in which the salaries had been lessened. I thought, however, that it might be expedient to enlighten him further on the subject, and therefore I have furnished him (as an individual governor, who, had it been possible, would have requested an audience) with such particulars as appeared fitted to inform him on the real state of the case. I do not suppose I shall have any reply, as Mr. Stanley is so occupied with various concerns, and as my statement had nothing in it tending to call forth an answer.

MY DEAR ———,

Dawson Street, Jan. 18, 1831.

I do not think that Mr. Stanley's inquiry into the reduction of salaries bodes any evil to the Orphan House. It rather shews his attention to circumstances which are necessary to be known, in order to determine on the justness of the claim which comes before him. That he might possess this knowledge completely, and not partially, was the object of my communication.

I feel for Mr. ———; but, in this severe win-

ter, it was most unlikely that he should have escaped. And, perhaps, altogether, this constitutional liability may be necessary, in the view of Divine Providence, to counterpoise his professional popularity. Prosperity in any way, is too likely to fascinate the mind of man, if some sobering corrective does not accompany it. And such a corrective may be providentially furnished in a constitutional weakness, as probably as in any other way. There is something deeply mysterious in the union of general laws with the movements of particular Providence; but of the fact that they are so united, it is not possible to doubt.

I hope my constitutional malady will be overruled for my good. I am suffering not a little from it just at this time. But I am sensible that it is, after all, a light affliction, in comparison with those that are suffered by others.

The account you give me is distressing; and especially in the latter instance. I cannot but think that well-disposed persons often suffer in their religious interests, from not having sufficiently identified the habitual frame of the mind and heart with religion. The considering this great object as an extrinsic blessing in itself, taking place in some sort in our circumstances, rather than in our moral nature, seems to me likely to abate the anxiety for victory over wrong desires and passions. I do not mean that such a desire is not sincerely felt; but, only, that it is not felt in that way of concentrated and absolute solicitude, without which such an object will not be accomplished. I suspect this to be a serious defect

in modern divinity ; and, though the person referred to has, I am sure, in this instance, entertained no gross error, yet, whether he has had such horrifying views of unsubdued tempers, as the deep religion of the heart requires, may be, perhaps, a matter of doubt.

Ever yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO ———.

January 20th, 1831.

I CANNOT state any improvement in my own health. Dr. Cheyne seems confident that nothing more than nervousness is affecting me. But the uneasiness I am liable to in my stomach and bowels; has made me more than usually hippish; while, at the same time, the very feeling itself tells me that it is, in its nature, of the same kind with the other symptoms under which I have been so long suffering. Some of them were certainly much harder to bear. But my present distress seems to myself to have in it more of real disease. In this, however, I may be mistaken. And, undoubtedly, I have, as yet, no mark of natural decay.

January 25, 1831.

I cannot say any thing better of myself. Still, notwithstanding all I feel, I am sensible that nervous distress is a comparatively light affliction. I have no doubt that Divine Wisdom saw some kind of corporeal discipline to be indispensable for me; and I cannot conceive how any thing of this kind, proportioned to its purpose, could have been

more easy to be endured, or more mingled with mercy, than that to which I am subjected.

Jan. 27, 1831.

The frost has deeply affected me, and makes me feel as if I were another kind of creature. But it so happens that my main discomfort has come upon me within this day or two; and to-day, though it has rained, my feelings are nearly as they were before.

Feb. 18, 1831.

My nerves are still exceedingly disordered; and it seems as if they were continually taking a new turn. In short, I have great fear that I shall not long be able to write even as I am now doing. The truth is, I cannot describe my own state.

Feb. 25, 1831.

I do not feel myself growing better. My nerves are greatly affected; and I seem as if I were much weaker than formerly. I can only leave myself in the hands of Him who, I humbly trust, will take gracious care of the work of his own hands.

I hope I shall be able to see you on Tuesday. By *you*, I mean dear Mrs. La Touche and yourself. Adieu!

March 3d, 1831.

Nothing can be kinder than Mrs. La Touche's wish to have me at Bellevûe: but, indeed, it cannot be; the thing is impossible. In my present state, I could neither go to Bellevûe, nor stay at it, if I were already there. In fact, I can only leave myself in the hands of the Almighty, who,

I humbly trust, will do that which is best for me on the whole.

Adieu, my dear ———, and believe me

My dear Mrs. La Touche's and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

March 10, 1831.

Mrs. Cheyne called on me this morning, to tell me that she had had a letter from the Doctor, in which he says his coming back, at present, is impossible, as he has not grown better in any respect, and that his pulse beats above a hundred strokes in each minute: she therefore determines to let her house, and remove to him. I need not tell you how much this sinks me.

March 14, 1831.

I believe the swelling in my knee and leg is, at least, stationary; but I do not find that this makes any difference in my principal complaints, which are certainly as distressing as ever. I thank God, however, I still sleep. Though I very often am awake, I fall asleep again. Dr. Cheyne's bad health, you may well conceive, adds deeply to my distress. I do not wonder, therefore, that my dear Mrs. La Touche and you should feel more for me than for yourselves. I am glad to think that your present circumstances make you independent of medical assistance.

Wednesday, 12 o'clock, April 27, 1831.

I do not lose any time in acknowledging your letter; both because I could not otherwise be sure of catching you; and, as to myself, I know not "what a day may bring forth." I can write to-

day, but I cannot be sure of being able to write to-morrow. The latter part of Monday, and the greater part of yesterday, I was so ill with my eye, that, if the pain had continued, I could not have written. But it is better to-day ; and I can use it without trouble.

I am sure you will write to me from time to time, however irregular I may be in replying. What the all-wise God means to do with me, I know not, but I wish to submit to his disposal ; and, I trust, He will support me.

May 6, 1831.

I cannot tell you that I am better. I rather think I am, very gradually, yielding to my complaint ; and that, every two or three days, I have to combat with some new trouble. I have reason to be thankful that my eye has given me little uneasiness ; so that I can, for the most part, use it freely. But it was, for a short time, very alarming. I trust I am, on the whole, in the hands of the all-wise and all-gracious God, and that He will lay no more on me than He will enable me to bear.

I thank you cordially for your kind purpose of writing to me, though I may be ill able to reply to you.

And I earnestly hope Mrs. La Touche's health will be advanced by her movements ; and that you, too, will be a gainer.

Ever hers and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

May 14, 1831.

* * * I can only write where I cannot help it, except to yourself. I received a very affectionate note from kind Lady ———, a few days ago. She stated, as her reason, that she had no longer you to apply to about me: and, therefore, requested that I should merely send her a verbal answer. But I could not do this; I was obliged to write a few lines to her.

* * * * There is lately published a neat little volume of Bishop Kenn's Poetry, which I advise you to get. Though the compiler professes to give all that is valuable, he has not selected my favourite poem on Truth.

After my writing this note, you'll hardly believe that I am not better; but indeed, my dear, I am still as disordered as ever. I am more accustomed to the change which has taken place in me; but, in other respects, I think myself to be steadily, though slowly declining.

Adieu, my dear ———! May God enable me quietly to bear his will; and to submit myself to his disposal! And may He be pleased to lay no more upon me, than He will assist me in bearing!

Ever my dear Mrs. La Touche's and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY DEAR ———,

May 23, 1831.

* * * * As to myself, I am easier than I was; but not at all substantially better. Yet increased ease is a matter of thankfulness. One cause (as, I think, I mentioned before) is, that I am better acquainted with the nature of my complaints, and, in some degree, feel them less. I thank God I get wonderfully good rest; seldom lying an hour awake for many nights together; only my sleep is not always of the best quality; still it is sleep. Adieu!

Ever my dear Mrs. La Touche's and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO ———.

MY DEAR ———,

May 30, 1831.

I SINCERELY thank you for your punctuality in writing. I certainly do not think myself at all better; and yet the word "easier" is applicable to my case: I think, most probably, because I am more accustomed to the symptoms.

Mrs. ——— is, indeed, an old friend of mine. When I knew her, she was a lively little girl; her father and mother living, though neither of them healthy, and both residing with a worthy uncle of hers; to whom, I suppose, she at length became heiress, and her only daughter after her. Their

name was ——. I have a prayer-book, in high preservation, which Mrs. — gave to me. The uncle's name was ——. I met him at Matlock, and he invited me to his house. He had been a barrister, and was well acquainted with the remarkable characters of his time. He was, in truth, one of the pleasantest old gentlemen I had ever met with.

Adieu, my dear ——. The pleasantest part of your letters is that in which you tell me of your dear —'s health and your own. Every thing you tell me is pleasant to me; but a good report of her and your health rises above all the rest.

The bad writing of this letter arises, in part, from an exceeding bad pen; good pens, from some cause or other, not being to be had in Dublin.

Ever my dear Mrs. La Touche's and yours,

ALEX. KNOX.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

MY VERY DEAR FRIENDS,

June 9, 1831.

THOUGH you have addressed me individually, I must reply to you collectively, as I am unable, from weakness, to do otherwise. Weakness, however, not altogether of my usual sort; but a peculiar kind of cramp, which almost unfits me for writing a single line with ease or comfort.

But be that as it may, I was deeply gratified by hearing from you both this morning. The

account of Archdeacon — was truly pleasant; and the statement respecting his wife appears to me in perfect keeping with her childhood. The Archdeacon's wish to argue points with me would amuse me, if the subject were not too grave for that. But, alas! my power of arguing points is all over. I could, now, no more maintain an argument, than I could set out and walk a mile.

Sir Thomas's wish that I should know Mr. Stanley, amounts to the same thing. In fact, I am not what I even was; and, therefore, feel less disposed than ever to bring myself into notice. I felt this, even before last February; but, then, the inability came upon me with irresistible force; and, since that time, I have literally been good for nothing.

I must stop; I meant to have said something about myself, but I must be satisfied with what I have said. Therefore, adieu, my dearest Mrs. La Touche, and my dearest —. And

Believe me yours ever,

ALEX. KNOX.

You will remember me kindly to Mrs. —, and her children.

LAST PRAYER OF ALEXANDER KNOX, ESQ.

June 16, 1831.

O, MERCIFUL GOD! bless me with that desire, and with that homage of the heart; open my understanding, that I may understand the Scriptures; and quicken my heart, that I may feel their power. Bless me with all that desire; bless me with that knowledge, and with that homage of the heart: and oh, blessed Redeemer, establish my mind and heart into obedience to thyself!

Oh, merciful God! deepen thy own invaluable work in me. Set me the love of Thee, my Father, and of Thee, O my Redeemer, on the throne of my heart. And bring every movement of my mind and heart into subjection to Thee, O Father! and to Thee, O Redeemer! and deepen thy most invaluable work in me.

Endear his holy religion in its depth, in its fulness, and in all its tempers, to my heart's heart; make me unfeignedly thankful for thy mercies; forgive all my sins, for the sake of the Redeemer. Incline and enable me, and incline and enable, to commit myself unreservedly to Thee.

Bless me with every holy desire, bless me with that knowledge and with that homage of the heart.

Add solidity and depth to what you hast prepared for me; and work and deepen thy own invaluable work into me, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

[illegible]

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the Board of Directors to the Board of Directors, dated January 1, 1900. The letter is addressed to the Board of Directors and is signed by the Secretary.

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THE END.

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ERRATUM.

Page 204, line 7 from bottom, *for* Syria, *read* Israel.



